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MARVEL AGE

CHRISTMAS SPECIAL!

INKER EXTRAORDINAIRE ISSUE!
JOE SINNOTT AND ERNIE CHAN INTERVIEWED!

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STAN LEE PRESENTS
MARVEL AGE®

Witterstaetter's Witticisms

I would like to wish you a happy new year. But that's hard to do.

Everytime I try to write those words, and mean it, my mind drifts back to a silent form made of hay and hair and skin, crouching eternally for the kill in the darkened halls of the Sydney Museum of Natural History.

He is a New Zealand Tasmainian Tiger, and the last one anyone will ever see. Because he killed the sheep, that were introduced to his world, for food, they in turn were killed by man. Now, like the Passenger Pigeon and the Dodo bird, we remember the last one by making him look so life-like — in death.

At the time, I wrote:

> Now, one lone tiger stands behind
> soulless glass. His brown hair is worn,
> His set smile is a grin of scorn,
> Eyes, like man's, are forever blind

Am I being a little *too* self-indulgent? Maybe. But the truth of the matter is that the Earth, in all its variety, is slowly being wittled away. When the animals are dead, and the stuffed hides have turned to dust, what will be left?

Charles Achley, who is responsible for the great panoramas in the Hall of Africa in the New York Museum of Natural History thought about that. He spent many years gathering specimens of animals and plants because he already could see man's adverse effects on his beloved continent at the turn of the century. He wanted people to still be able to see what these animals looked like and how they lived. But maybe even Achley didn't envision that the only place these animals might remain would be in this artificial state.

But, there is the hope that the world might slowly be waking up. Your office is a good place to start.

Being a paper-related industry, Marvel has become aware of waste and its effects on the environment, and is currently looking into waste-reduction programs. One program, implemented under the leadership of editor Rob Tokar, involves the gathering of all used xerox paper and binding it into note pads so the backs can also be used. This paper is also being used by some to type letter columns and make xeroxes for color guides. It may not always make for the prettiest stationery, but what it does for waste reduction *is* beautiful!

Basically, little steps in the right direction can add up. Recycle your papers and your cans. Think about your use of certain animal products also, so that when your children see an elephant, it can be a living, breathing creature.

If we can all do that, then it really might be a Happy *New* Year!

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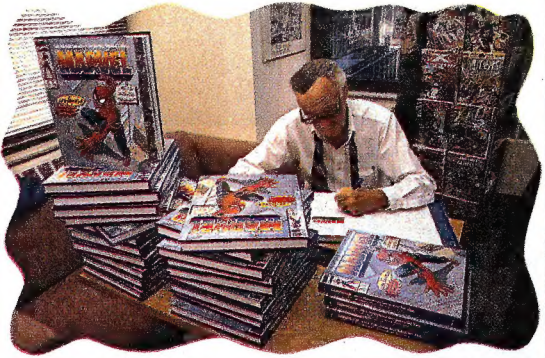
WE WISH YOU A MERRY X-MAN

ITEM! It's that time of year again. . . mistletoe and hot toddies, stockings and candles. . .and of course, the MARVEL HOLIDAY SPECIAL! In this holiday epic, you'll see the old X-Men battle the Blob and evil mutants at Macy's! You'll see Captain America meet Bucky's family! You'll find out what kind of presents the Punisher delivers! You'll see Spider-Man and J. Jonah Jameson in a Yuletide fable! All this and more is coming your way, courtesy of Tom DeFalco, Sal Buscema, Dave Cockrum, Walt Simonson, Arthur Adams, Ron Lim, Scott Lobdell, Klaus Janson, Steven Grant, and Danny Fingeroth.

Photo by Elliot R. Brown



STAN MAKES BOOK

ITEM! It seems like we should call the column *Mondo Stan* this month. Anyway, during his promotion of the new hardcover book, *Marvel, Five Fabulous Decades of the World's Greatest Comics,* by Les Daniels and published by Abrams Inc., Stan Lee did a 3 hour book signing at one of Manhattan's Walden Book Stores. Stan delighted the crowds with tales of the early days as he scribbled his distinctive moniker upon thousands of copies. You'd think that a guy would want to go back to the hotel, catch a few Z's, and prepare for tomorrow's appearance on *Good Day New York,* right? Wrong.

Stan hopped a cab and zipped uptown to our Park Avenue offices, to delight the crowds with tales of the early days as he scribbled his distinctive moniker upon another couple of thousand copies for Marvel staffers. It was a great opportunity for newer Marvel creators to meet and greet the man who, without whom, they'd be shucking fries in a paper hat. Always the journalist, we had that man with a camera, Eliot R. Brown, take these great shots of Stan in action. Thanks, Eliot.

A BLAZING BOMBER

ITEM! Time again for another peak at the great model kits coming at you from Horizon Hobbies! This month's vinyl number is none other than the Invincible Iron Man! The kit stands 13 inches tall when completed, and is guaranteed *not* to cause irreparable damage to your central nervous system! Or, you can have him duke it out with the other armored model kit, Dr. Doom. Will we have yet another kit for you next month? Tune in and see!

THE MEDIA WATCH CONTINUES!!

ITEM! Yes, friends, once again a few of you sharp-eyed Marveloids have set your friends on their ears, by scanning the pages of America's mainstream periodicals and finding references to our very own Marvel Comics! These visionaries of the Marvel Universe are repaid for their above the board performance by the significant dispensation of the fabled *No-Prize!*

So, first up, a word of thanks and congratulations are in store for Sue and Geoffery Golden of Seattle, Washington, for their spotting in the August issue of *Interview Magazine* a talk with none-other than Stan "The Man" Lee. In this two page piece, Stan displays his down-to-earth attitudes for creating characters, and solves the twenty-year mystery surrounding the chest of one CONAN THE BARBARIAN. Kudos to Sue and Geoff!

Our other Media Watch Inductee is Ms. Deidre Majeski of Hackensack, New Jersey, who spotted yet another Stan Lee interview, this time in the pages of *USA Today.* Ms. Majeski said in her correspondence that she spotted the little number on her daily commute to work, and don't you know, she thought of MARVEL AGE immediately! Good work, Deidre!

And remember, Marveloids, that if you spot any mention of Marvel news in your local papers, magazines, or TV news, please lettuce, — *OOPS!* — let us know about it. Who wouldn't want to join these esteemed ranks?

WAMMA-JAMMA

ITEM! Good news! The shipments of the very first WAM! membership kits have begun! They went out October 24th, and WAM Manager Dwight Zimmerman was at the factory making sure everything was in top shape. The first 24,000 lucky WAMmers are considered "Founding Members," and will receive a poly-bagged copy of X-FORCE #1 and a set of X-force trading cards. We *told* you to join up early!

SAM HAIN? NEVER HEARD OF HIM!

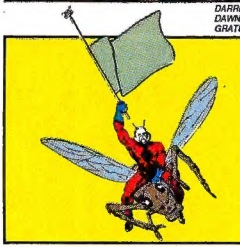
ITEM! Why would anyone have a Halloween party on October 25? That's just what the esteemed Marvel staffers were asking while making room in the Bullpen for yet another Marvel Halloween bash. Emceed by the ever-capable Mark Gruenwald, the games, which included *The Mummy Wrap Game* (where staffers wrap an employee up in toilet paper), *Pass the Pylon* (where staffers must pass a wooden rod between their knees to other players), and the venomous *Draw the Dweeb* (a combination of Win, Lose or Draw and charades), went off without a hitch. Proudly, we can boast that there were no injuries, although inker Don Hudson managed to squeeze 87 candy corns in his mouth at once!

PHOTO BY ROBBIE CAROSELLA

DARREN AUCK AS LOBO, DAVID SHARPE AS KANE- THE UNDERTAKER, DAWN GEIGER AS THE BLACK CAT, AND STEVE BUNCHE AS THE GRATUITOUS VIOLENCE-DUDE.

I LIKE A PARADE

ITEM! To be featured in our next issue of MARVEL AGE is the full scoop on the 1991 Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, of which the presentation of the Spider-Man balloon is always a highlight! We'll have all the facts, blow by blow coverage (*get it?*), and a complete photographic record of the festivities by that man with the camera, Eliot R. Brown. Gee, maybe we should've called this column *Mondo Eliot.*



MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE FARM —

ITEM! Back in MARVEL AGE #107, we reported that Jim Salicrup had an *Uncle Milton Fascinating Ant Farm* in his office, which he and WAM'mer Dwight Zimmerman kept going with a steady stream of ant food and bagels. Well, we are saddened to report the loss of every single ant in the colony. It wasn't anybody's fault — nature can be cruel.

ALSO IN THE NEWS —

ITEM! We know that you probably just blew out your entire bank account trying to give a decent present to your Aunt May this holiday season, and that the last thing on your mind is going out to the store to buy more stuff. But hey, why take an attitude like that? Break out that gift money you scored, because there are some January happenings that are gonna knock your X-mas stockings off the mantlepiece!

First up, anybody who's anybody knows about the huge, 19-part *Operation Galactic Storm* crossover event, starting up in CAPTAIN AMERICA #398. You won't want to miss this one, guys and gals, or else you won't know what the heck is happening in parts 2 through 19! For more complete coverage of this monumental Kree-Shi'ar War, take a look on page 9 for Nel Yomtov's insightful article about the *Galactic Storm* in particular and the state of crossovers in general.

Young readers and those readers young at heart will want to pick up the BULLWINKLE AND ROCKY Trade Paperback, by Dave Manak, Ernie Colon and Al Milgrom. Old faves Dudley Do-Right, Natasha and Boris Badanov, Mr. Peabody and Sherman all kick in for the good times. This book, reasonably priced at $4.95, is great for anybody who wants to pull a Trade Paperback out of a hat.

Making their return to the specialty shops are the HAWKEYE trade paperback, by Mark Gruenwald and Bret Breeding; the Punisher in RETURN TO BIG NOTHING, by Steven Grant and Mike Zeck. BIG NOTHING is this reporter's dream pick for the plot to *Punisher 2.* But, I digress.

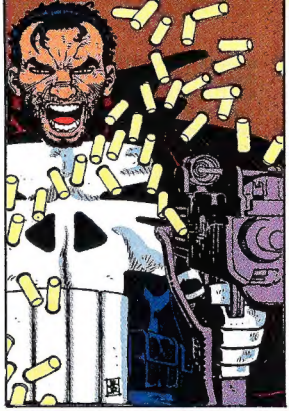
For everybody who can't afford the back-issue prices of FANTASTIC FOUR #347-349, we're presenting the

FANTASTIC FOUR Bookshelf edition, by Walter Simonson, Art Adams, and Art Thibert. I hadn't been reading FF when this thing first hit last December, and I read it for the first time in a jet from L.A. to New York, at 31,000 feet. Never before had I been so compelled to skydive as when I realized it was a 3-parter and I only had the first two chapters! That won't happen when I get the collected volume.

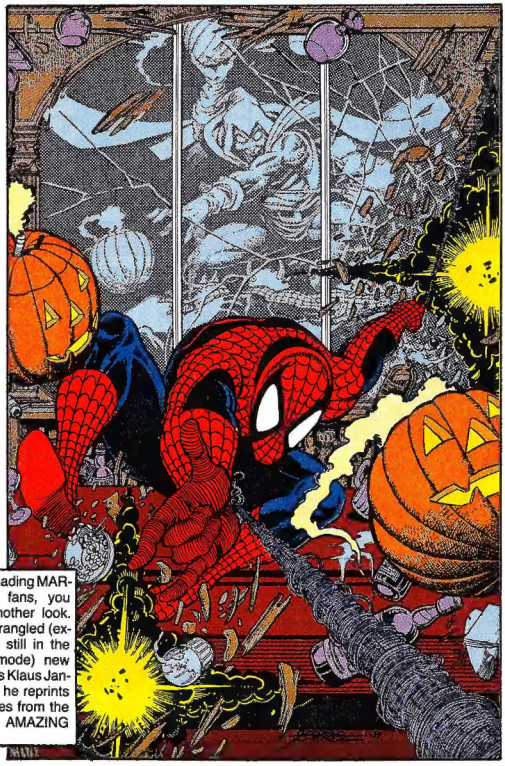
For anyone who's been in outer space for the last month, there's a new Punisher book coming from Don Daley's office, titled PUNISHER WAR ZONE, and it's by Chuck Dixon, John Romita Jr. and Klaus Janson. If you missed our last issue of MARVEL AGE, which included an in-depth interview with John Jr., we strongly urge you to check it out, if for nothing else than the die-cut bullet hole cover over a cover! Anyway, in WAR ZONE, we can expect to see lots of, and please forgive this use of the overplayed adjective, *gritty* action. I know I'll be reading this one.

Two new Graphic Novels are speeding your way, the Avengers star in EMPEROR DOOM, in a tale by David Michelinie and Bob Hall, in which the title probably says it all, and RICK MASON, SECRET AGENT, by James D. Hudnell and John Ridgway. This book features the Kingpin in a pre-*Last Rites* storyline.

Three upcoming Trade Paperbacks are the SPIDER-MAN VS. VENOM, by David Michelinie and Todd McFarlane, SPIDER-MAN: TORMENT, also by Todd, and the X-MEN: FROM THE ASHES, by Chris Claremont and a whole bunch of artists. These will all be big sellers, so reserve your copies early.



A re-printing of an old book that is now a new book (*huh?*) is the BOYS' RANCH hardcover, which reprints the entire run of Joe Simon-Jack Kirby cowboy series from the 1950's. This 208 page hardcover collection is brought to you by those MARVEL MASTERWORKS people, so you can expect a high quality volume.



And if you haven't been reading MARVEL TALES, Spider-Man fans, you should give this series another look. Editor Kelly Corvese has wrangled (excuse the use of term, I'm still in the cowboy BOYS' RANCH mode) new cover art from such greats as Klaus Janson and George Perez, as he reprints the classic Hobglobin stories from the Roger Stern and J.R. JR. AMAZING SPIDER-MAN era.

MARVEL TOP TEN LIST

I have a really bad case of heartburn while writing this column. . .one of those really bad *agidas* that makes you wanna curse the guy who invented the Doritos you just ate. And it got me thinking about those great Marvel super heroes. Don't be alarmed by the seeming gap in logic, folks. . .I'll get to the point.

Marvel's got quite a few fire-breathing characters. Talented guys and gals who can spew hot fire like a freelancer putting on the schmooze just before getting his page rate increased. Surprisingly, not all of these fiery breathed beasties are dragons. So here, tabulated for all to see, are the *Top Ten Marvel Fire-Breathers.*

10. Fing Fang Foom
9. Dragon Man
8. Pyro
7. The Human Torch
6. Circus of Crime's Fire-Eater
5. Surtur
4. Firelord
3. Lockheed
2. Numbers
1. J. Jonah Jameson

Mike Lackey

EAT AT JOE'S

ITEM! Marvel recently honored Joe Sinnott, for his 65th birthday and his accomplishments for 40-plus years in comics. The staff dined at the chic and elite America's Cafe, and much fun was had by all. We're pleased to present this group shot of the folks who keep the Marvel Universe so neat and tidy.

(Back row, L to R) DEATHLOK editor Tom Brevoort, Executive Editor Bob Budiansky, IRON MAN editor Nel Yomtov, WCW WRESTLING editor Mike Rockwitz, Epic Exec. Editor Carl Potts, SHE - HULK editor Renee Witterstaetter, the infamous John Romita.

(Front Row, L to R) MARVEL AGE assistant editor Mike Lackey, CONAN assistant Barry Dutter, Really Senior Editor Ralph Macchio, cover colorist George Roussos, Editor-in-Chief Tom Defalco, "Man of the Hour" Joe Sinnott, *M.'s Rems* scribe Mark Gruenwald, Traffic Manager Virginia Romita, "World's Toughest Proofreader" Jack Abel, and Al Milgrom. *Whew!*

For a complete, in-depth interview with Joe, turn to page 21.

STAN'S SOAPBOX

Hi, Heroes!

Y'know, if anyone ever had any doubts about the burgeoning popularity of mighty Marvel, those doubts can now be put to rest, thanks to a publishing phenomenon which has occurred and is still occurring at this very moment. Naturally, I'm referring to the amazing reception that the public at large has given to the sensational new history of Marvel entitled, logically enough, *"MARVEL, Five Fabulous Decades of the World's Greatest Comics!"*

But before we get to the meaty stuff, I just had a perplexing thought regarding the expression I just used, "public at large." Why does one always add the words "at large?" Is there a counter expression such as "public at small?" If not, why not? And why don't these ponderous problems bother other people as much as me? That's what's wrong with the world; not enough attention is paid to the things that really matter!

Anyway, to get back to MARVEL, wouldja believe that the first edition of 100,000 copies has already been sold out? And we're not talkin' a couple bucks a throw! We're talking one of the year's most expensive coffee table books! (Incidentally, I don't ever want to learn that you've placed it on anything other than a coffee table! Kitchen tables and bridge tables are out! There must be a compelling reason why such volumes are called coffee table books. So be forewarned. If you ever put it in the wrong place someone may just come by and repossess it. In such extreme cases I hear the authorities show 'em no mercy!)

If you happen to be reading this before you've finished making up your Christmas shopping list, let me advise you that *"MARVEL, Five Fabulous Decades of the World's Greatest Comics"* (as the book is modestly titled) would make a sensational gift item for anyone who's interested in super heroes, art, publishing, entertainment, script-writing, biography and/or fantasy. And if there are any subjects I may have carelessly omitted, the same goes for them, too!

Now then, with all this free advertising you'd probably assume that Marvel has published the book and yours truly has written it. Au contraire, mon vieux! The publishing company is Harry N. Abrams, famous for bringing you some of the world's most beautiful and prestigious art books, while the author is Les Daniels who is well known for both his books about comics and his exciting works of fiction. But *"MARVEL, Five Fabulous etc. etc."* is no work of fiction. It's a carefully documented, magnificently illustrated, brilliantly researched history of Marvel Comics, the little company that could! It contains over four hundred pages of illustrations, many in full, glorious color, as well as tantalizing tidbits about virtually all of your bullpen favorites, plus little known anecdotes about the wonderful world of comic books, from the earliest days when they were first unleashed upon a defenseless public, right up to the present when comics have become one of the most popular forms of literary entertainment on the face of the earth! And I hope you've noticed that I'm purposely keeping this article low-key because I'm justly famous for my reluctance to indulge in hyperbole!

There's only one more thing left to add, and I hope it won't turn you off. Even though I mentioned that the book was written by someone other than my own sagacious self, I must confess that I did personally pen the impassioned introduction! Hey, you know me! I'm not about to let such a great book slip by without getting my name on the cover somehow! But don't let that throw you. It's perfectly legal to read the entire *"MARVEL, Five Fabulous Decades of the World's Greatest Comics"* without bothering to read my fanciful foreword! Of course, if you really should happen to skip over it I'll never talk to you again, but in the words of the immortal bard, that might well turn out to be " a consummation devoutly to be wished!"

Incidentally, I just realized that I've been guilty of making a momentous mistake. Anyone else might just let it slide by, hoping you wouldn't notice. But no true Marvelite could ever adopt such a cavalier attitude! Therefore, it's only fitting that I level with you and let the chips fall where they may. Each time I've mentioned the *"MARVEL, Five Fabulous Decades of the World's Greatest Comics,"* I've quoted it incorrectly! Since the little one-line slogan appears *above* the name Marvel, the correct way to write the title would have to be *"Five Fabulous Decades of the World's Greatest Comics" followed* by the word *"MARVEL!"* There can be no excuse for my incredible inaccuracy. All I can do is admit my error and hope that you, a true Keeper of the Faith, will find it in your heart to somehow grant me absolution!

And now, before closing, I want to share another Christmas goodie with you, and this one won't cost either of us one red cent! It's the best holiday present I could have hoped for, and I'm betting that you'll be just as thrilled by it as I am. Fact is, we've finally signed the contract to do a major motion picture starring Spider-Man! This time it's official! And the best part is, it will be written, directed and produced by none other than my good friend James Cameron, the genius who gave us ALIENS, THE ABYSS, TERMINATOR and TERMINATOR 2! Just imagine what a titanic talent like Jim Cameron will do with a character like Spidey! Verily, it doth make the senses reel!

Well, that's it for now. Don't wanna spoil you with too much good news! But, till I boggle your mind with next ish's pandemonious pronouncement, let me wish you the happiest of holidays as I gift you with this awesome little adage: "Le coeur a ses raisons que la raison ne connait point!" — as if you didn't know!

Excelsior!

— Stan Lee

WILLIE LUMPKIN

© 1991 by Stan Lee and Dan DeCarlo

DIDJA DELIVER MY LETTER TO SANTA, MR. LUMPKIN?
I SURE DID, PEE-WEE!
LEE and DeCARLO 12-30
AND DID HE SAY I'D GET A FOOT-BALL?
HOW CAN I DESTROY THAT CHILDISH FAITH?
YES, LITTLE PAL! HE SAID YOU'D GET THE FOOTBALL YOU ASKED FOR?
DON'T "LITTLE PAL" ME, LUMPY!
IT JUST SO HAPPENS I ASKED FOR A BIKE!!

MARVEL® TRIVIA QUIZ

It was the 1970s — Gerald Ford was having accidents, K.C. and the Sunshine Band were in the top ten, and Ernie Chan was inking CONAN THE BARBARIAN! One of the most ubiquitous artists of 1970s Marvel Comics, Ernie's pencils and/or inks could be found in nearly every corner of the Marvel Universe, as we demonstrate in this quiz of twelve trivia teasers! Celebrate Ernie's return to CONAN by testing your memory — and maybe, just maybe, by checking the answers on page 31!
— Brian Nelson

1. As artist on KULL THE DESTROYER, Ernie chronicled the Atlantean warrior's quest to regain his throne from:
   A) Boraqh al-Sharaq
   B) Thulsa Doom
   C) Baron Kaanuub
   D) Chaka Khan

2. Embellishing John Buscema's work on CONAN THE BARBARIAN, Ernie was on board for the Cimmerian's exploits with Belit and her pirate brigade:
   A) the Black Corsairs
   B) the Grey Ravens
   C) the Red Dragons
   D) the Purple People Eaters

3. One of Conan's primary foes during the Buscema-Chan era was the beast-king:
   A) Abombi
   B) Ajaga
   C) Aquilonia
   D) ALF

4. And Ernie was also CONAN inker at the introduction of which other significant figure in the barbarian mythos?
   A) Red Sonja
   B) Fafnir
   C) Zula
   D) Schwarzenegger

5. Ernie embellished the classic WHAT IF? tale bringing Conan to the twentieth century, which introduced what lady cab driver, modeled after Roy Thomas's soon-to-be wife?
   A) Danieke
   B) Danielle
   C) Danette
   D) Dante

6. Ernie provided art for the adventures of which Barsoomian warrior?
   A) John Carter
   B) Thongor
   C) Brak
   D) Groo

7. Ernie's inking assignment on DR. STRANGE teamed the sorcerer supreme with Nighthawk, against which classic DAREDEVIL foe?
   A) Bullseye
   B) Mr. Fear
   C) Death-Stalker
   D) Darla

8. As a Marvel cover artist, Ernie provided numerous covers for such titles as POWER MAN AND IRON FIST, GHOST RIDER, PETER PARKER, MASTER OF KUNG FU, and which comics series based on an NBC television show?
   A) V
   B) MAN FROM U.N.C.L.E.
   C) MAN FROM ATLANTIS
   D) MY MOTHER, THE CAR

9. Another unforgettable Chan cover depicted Captain America being attacked by:
   A) Uncle Sam
   B) the statue in the Lincoln Memorial
   C) the Trojan Horde
   D) migraines

10. Ernie's work on POWER MAN AND IRON FIST introduced the wolf-woman known as:
   A) Fera
   B) Fang
   C) Lupina
   D) Greta Scacchi

11. Collaborating with Sal Buscema on THE INCREDIBLE HULK, Ernie recorded the green goliath's friendship with:
   A) Sam Wilson
   B) Snap Wilson
   C) Jim Wilson
   D) Flip Wilson

12. Who received a rare turn in the spotlight in a MARVEL PREMIERE exploit rendered by Chan and Mike Vosburg?
   A) Warlock
   B) Tigra
   C) Paladin
   D) Nathan Lubensky

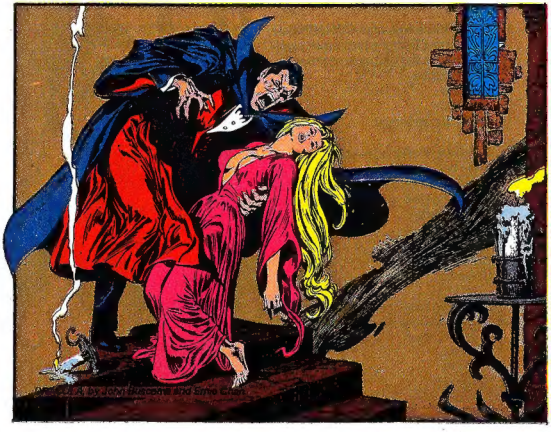
THE AMAZING CHAN

Ernie Chan has inked more pages of Conan than perhaps any other artist. His legendary brush strokes have earned him a reputation as one of the best inkers in the business. Earlier this year, Ernie reunited with his old collaborators, Roy Thomas and John Buscema, to once again form "the team supreme" on SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN. Ernie also inks the color CONAN THE BARBARIAN comic over penciler Mike Docherty. This means that one of the most-requested Conan illustrators of all is now doing both monthly Conan books on a full-time basis. By Crom, sounds like cause for an interview!

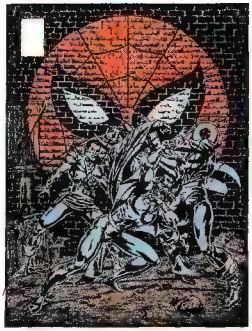
We caught up with Ernie in one of his rare visits to New York. Ernie spent about a week and a half in the Marvel Bullpen, working on Conan pages, and offering inking tips to some of the talented young upstarts in the Bullpen. All were en-Chanted by Ernie's inking wizardry; there was a crowd around him, everyone wanting to watch the master at work. Ernie was glad to answer questions for all, and many visiting artists were thrilled by the chance to meet one of their inking idols.

Ernie is back home in California now, but his work can be found twice a month in your favorite Conan mags. Truly this is a time for much rejoicing in the land! Ernie has once again raised the savage brush of Chan! So raise a flagon of ale and give a toast! The master has returned!

MA: *Ernie, how does it feel to be back doing both Conan books full-time?*
ERNIE: Couldn't be better.
MA: *It must be great working with John Buscema again.*
ERNIE: Yep. I was waiting for this for a long time. I've been just clinging to this book until John came back. I'm glad we are working together again.
MA: *Did you think John would come back?*
ERNIE: Sure he would! I know he loves Conan as much as I do. We both love Conan, and we're a great team. We're a winning team, and now we're back! There's no way we can lose!
MA: *Well, you know the fans were all asking for you and John to come back.*
ERNIE: Yeah, I've read some of their letters, and I'm glad that the fans are backing me up. They help, and I'm glad they're here. I appreciate them.
MA: *How do you like inking Mike Docherty on CONAN THE BARBARIAN?*
ERNIE: He's an up-and-coming new guy, and he seems like he has a lot of talent. He has some new ideas, and his technique is kind of different from John's. It's a challenge inking him, too.
MA: *What do you like about Conan? Is he your favorite character?*
ERNIE: He's my most favorite character of all the super heroes. To prove it, I've been with him for so long, and. . .I don't want to get away from him!
MA: *Did you ever try and figure out how many pages of Conan you've done over the years?*
ERNIE: Ohhh. . .I think it's around. . . 10,000 — somewhere around there!
MA: *That's a lot of Conan!*
ERNIE: Yeah!
MA: *And you'll probably do another 10,000 more!*
ERNIE: Yeah! Another 10,000 more! Conan is not the regular super hero type where he's indestructible. He's just a regular guy, you know, with no super-powers, just his muscles, his wits. He fights. . . whoever. . .he goes anywhere and does anything. . .and I'm along with him!
MA: *Do you plan on painting any more covers for SAVAGE SWORD?*
ERNIE: I'm hoping I could. Now that I've gained some more knowledge and new techniques, I was hoping that I could paint some more covers, and show some new stuff.
MA: *Do you use a different technique for the black-and-white book as opposed to the color book?*
ERNIE: Yes. On the black-and-white book, I use more gray tones to render and to create a more atmospheric image, and on the color ones, I try to stick to more pure, solid forms, and then let the colorist take it over from there.
MA: *Do you have a preference of color over black-and-white? Or do you enjoy both equally?*
ERNIE: I enjoy black-and-white a little bit better than the color. Color — I like it if I have control of the coloring. I really like both of them.
MA: *Have you ever done any coloring yourself?*
ERNIE: No, but I was hoping that maybe I could color one or two books just to give it a new coloring style.
MA: *How long have you been doing Conan now?*
ERNIE: I've been at it (on and off) since 1972, so it's 19, 20 years.
MA: *Who was the first editor you worked with on Conan?*
ERNIE: Roy Thomas. And now he's back, as a writer, though, not as an editor.
MA: *And now you're working with Mike Rockwitz. . .*
ERNIE: Yeah. Mike Rockwitz is a great guy. He knows what he's doing. I'm glad he got us all back together.
MA: *How did you feel when Mike first called you and offered you the job?*
ERNIE: I was surprised! I'm glad he called me. I took it right away!
MA: *Do you remember your first Conan job?*
ERNIE: My first Conan job was. . .#27, I guess.
MA: *This was the black-and-white?*

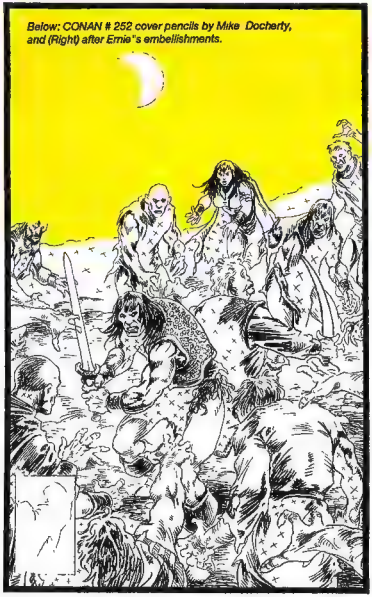


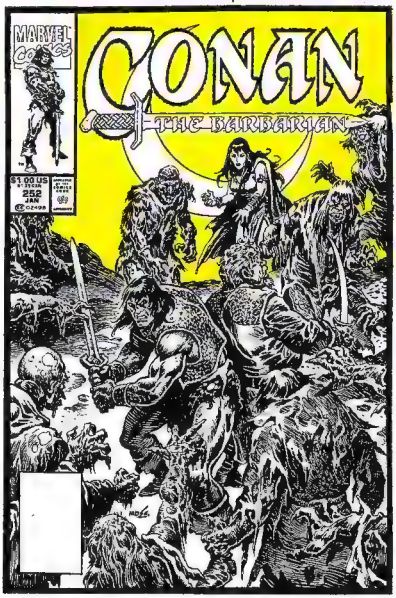
ERNIE: No, color.
MA: *And who was the artist on that?*
ERNIE: John Buscema.
MA: *So you were inking John right from the start.*
ERNIE: Right from the start.
MA: *Who are some of your favorite Conan pencilers that you've worked with over the years?*
ERNIE: I've got a few of them. . .Besides John Buscema, there's Rich Buckler, and Howard Chaykin, Gary Kwapisz, Ernie Colon. . .Docherty.
MA: *But most of your Conan work has been over John?*
ERNIE: Yeah. The majority of it is over John. And myself.
MA: *That's right, you're a penciler, as well. Do you plan on doing some more penciling for Conan?*
ERNIE: Sure! When I get the chance, I want to pencil, ink, color it myself — everything!
MA: *How about writing? Have you ever thought of that?*
ERNIE: No, I can't do writing. I'm poor with words. Maybe I could plot someday, though.
MA: *Which do you like better — penciling or inking?*
ERNIE: I like penciling and inking my own stuff, but if I have to choose between my own pencils and John Buscema's pencils, I would take John's pencils any time.
MA: *And why is that?*
ERNIE: Because whenever I ink John, I learn something new, I will pick it up and I will apply it on myself. That's the reason why his style and my style are not that far from each other.
MA: *Will you be doing anything else besides Conan?*
ERNIE: If I have the time to do anything else, I will, but I don't think I have the time!
MA: *Right now you're doing 70 pages a month of Conan — something like that?*
ERNIE: Yeah. In that vicinity.
MA: *How many pages a day do you do?*



ERNIE: An average of 2 and 1/2 to three pages a day, working twelve to fourteen hours a day.
MA: *Every day?*
ERNIE: Every day.
MA: *Never take a day off?*
ERNIE: Not if I can help it. I would rather work than take a day off.
MA: *I wish more of our freelancers felt that way! What other characters would you like to work on, other than Conan?*
ERNIE: I like Wolverine! And Punisher!
MA: *Have you ever worked on either of those characters?*
ERNIE: No! Not yet!
MA: *Well, maybe once this interview gets published, people will know what you want to do, and they'll start giving you calls.*
ERNIE: Maybe.
MA: *So you enjoy working on all types of comics — super heroes, and sword-and-sorcery, and whatever?*
ERNIE: Comics is in my blood. I was born with it. They can scrub me away, and I will always come back. I don't care what I work on, as long as it's comics.
MA: *What type of research do you do for Conan? Do you use a lot of reference material?*
ERNIE: I use ancient books on medieval ages, all these fantasy-type things. I think Frazetta has set up a kind of atmosphere for anything related to fantasy, I collect his books and use them for research sometimes. The penciler usually has about 80 percent of what I want in

Below: CONAN # 252 cover pencils by Mike Docherty, and (Right) after Ernie's embellishments.





there, and I fill in the rest — I take over from there.

MA: *On SAVAGE SWORD, John just does the breakdowns, and you do the finishes?*

ERNIE: Mostly, yeah. He does the breakdowns, and I just. . .do the finishes.

MA: *How do you like that arrangement?*

ERNIE: We work fine on that arrangement, because that way, John gives me more freedom, he gives me more room to ad lib. It works out fine.

MA: *On CONAN THE BARBARIAN, Docherty does full pencils?*

ERNIE: Yes. I wish he would do just breakdowns, because that way, the same way with John, I would have more freedom.

MA: *As an inker, you contribute quite a bit to the art. Many fans probably don't realize how much you add.*

ERNIE: Yes. I guess by now they know that I do have my own style on Conan. Mostly I pick up from John's pencils, and then I develop my own, and he's really happy that way.

MA: *What penciilers would you like to ink that you haven't?*

ERNIE: I'd like to try out Jim Lee — he's the most sensational guy right now. Whilce Portacio. . .

MA: *Todd McFarlane?*

ERNIE: Todd? It's a little too difficult to ink Todd. You have to just follow whatever he puts in. I don't know if I want to ink Todd! I'd also like to ink over Marc Silvestri — I like the flair of his pencil.

MA: *Where are you from originally, Ernie?*

ERNIE: I came from the Philippines. . .22 years ago.

MA: *You've been here ever since?*

ERNIE: Ever since, yeah.

MA: *Were you working on comics in the Phillipines?*

ERNIE: Yeah. I started on local comics in the Phillipines with some of those artists that work here in the states too. We grew up together.

MA: *What types of comics were you working on in the Phillipines?*

ERNIE: We had these comics that were meant for mature audiences — not for kids. We did soap opera things, like dramas. . .They were not kid stuff. They were mostly dramas.

MA: *Who were some of the artists that you worked with over there?*

ERNIE: Nestor Redondo, Alfredo Alcala, Tony DeZuniga, Danny Bulanadi, Romeo Tanghal, and. . .lots of others.

MA: *Did you actually grow up with all these people?*

ERNIE: Yeah. We grew up together, we knew each other well. We're still buddies right here.

MA: *Did you all come over at about the same time?*

ERNIE: No, each one came at his own personal different time.

MA: *When you came over, did you have a job lined up already?*

Ancient pin - up from HULK magazine, by Jim Starlin and Ernie Chan

ERNIE: No. When I came over, I went to look for Tony DeZuniga — he was ahead of me here, and I apprenticed for him again like I did in the Phillipines. I started out just doing backgrounds for him, and then I separated from him and went on my own.

MA: *How did you learn how to draw?*

ERNIE: Well, inking you have to do a lot of practice with the pen, with the brush, keep practicing every day. It's like swimming, or whatever sport you're in. Practice, practice, practice. And that's all you need to do.

MA: *Did you have a teacher, or were you self-taught?*

ERNIE: I learned from my colleagues, and from looking at favorite works. I would collect favorite works and then imitate them, and then practice. You try developing your own strokes, and you develop your own style from there.

MA: *Which of your colleagues did you learn the most from?*

ERNIE: Tony DeZuniga and Afredo Alcala are the two guys who helped me more than anybody else.

MA: *When you first came over, did you start working with DC in the beginning?*

ERNIE: Yeah. I worked with DC. They gave me some mystery short stories to work on, I started from there. At the same time I went to Marvel, and then I started working over Gil Kane's pencils, and then things took off from there.

MA: *Originally, you worked under the name of Ernie Chua, is that correct?*

ERNIE: Yes. I started out using "Ernie Chua" as my name, because that's the name I had on my passport. I had to go by my legal name, for tax purposes and stuff like that.

MA: *Is "Chua" your real name?*

ERNIE: No, that was a typographical error on my birth certificate that I had to use until I had a chance to change it to "Chan" when I got my citizenship in '76.

MA: *Now your name is legally Ernie Chan.*

ERNIE: That's my legal and true name, yes.

MA: *Do they know who Conan is in the Phillipines? Did you have Conan over there?*

ERNIE: Sure! Conan's popular over there, because of the movies and comics.

MA: *Did you know who Conan was before you came to America?*

ERNIE: Ummm. . .not until I worked on him.

MA: *So you came over to Marvel in 1972-73?*

ERNIE: '72. Around that time, yeah.

MA: And you started on Conan right away?

ERNIE: No, I started on Gil Kane. . .

MA: *What were you doing with Gil Kane?*

ERNIE: "Valley of the Worms." It was like a Conan-type of short story.

MA: *Was it a black-and-white?*

ERNIE: No, it was color.

MA: *And you got your first Conan job shortly after that?*

ERNIE: I think I worked on Gene Colan's DAREDEVIL. I worked on that first, and then Conan.

MA: *How did you like working with Gene Colan?*

ERNIE: He's like Mike Docherty — he doesn't do breakdowns. It's tough inking him because he's got all these shades and all these shadows cast. You have to follow the drawings. You have to trace it. It's not easy.

MA: *A lot of our readers might not know that you used to do a lot of super hero work. Who are some of the super heroes you've worked on over the years?*

ERNIE: I've done Hulk, I've done Batman. . .

MA: *Spider-Man?*

ERNIE: A few covers and one story of Spider-Man. . .Fantastic Four. . . Daredevil. . .Thor. . .That's about it.

MA: *Would you like to work on some of these characters again some day?*

ERNIE: Always. I want to do all of them if I can.

MA: *Recently, you were working for a computer firm, is that correct?*

ERNIE: Yeah. Recently I got into a job doing computer games and videos. I was painting backgrounds and then they would scan it into the computer, and then they would do animation that would go into that background.

MA: *What were some of the games you were working on?*

ERNIE: The company is called Sierra On-Line. They've got this whole line of games, all starting with "Quest." "Quest for Glory," "Space Quest," "Police Quest." I worked on this "King's Quest 5," and my last computer project is "Robin Hood," to come out around October.

MA: *These are computer games, right? You wouldn't see these in an arcade, would you?*

ERNIE: No. These are computer games. They come out as software. You buy them, and you work them out on your computer — whatever computer you have — IBM, MacIntosh, whatever.

MA: *Have you played these games yourself?*

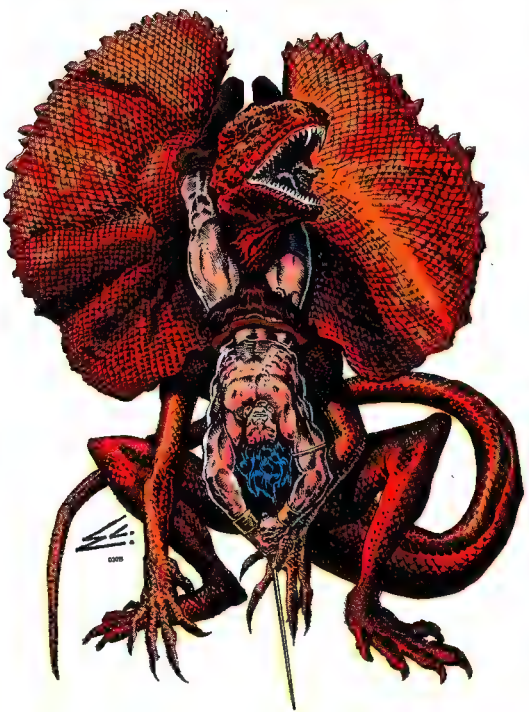
ERNIE: They are not easy games. You have to spend hours and hours to play them. I've played off and on, not the whole game, just familiarize myself. But not the whole game.

MA: *You quit your job there to come back to Conan full-time?*

ERNIE: Yeah. When Mike Rockwitz offered me both books, I found it impossible to stay on my day job and keep up with the deadlines. So it was either drop the books, or drop my day job. So I had to drop my day job.

MA: *It must have felt like you were coming home again!*

ERNIE: I am home! I'm back!



Ernie is back, and this time, he's here to stay. Judging by the amount of letters we've received since Ernie's return, the fans couldn't be happier to have him doing Conan again. Ernie is where he's always belonged, working beside Roy Thomas and John Buscema. Somewhere in the heavens, Crom is smiling once again.

As an ironic sidenote: shortly after this interview was completed, X-MEN editor Bob Harras saw Ernie at work in the Bullpen, and offered him his first ever Wolverine pin-up to ink! The Wolverine piece was penciled by Bullpenner Ed Murr, who was seated next to Ernie during the Chan Man's brief stay at Marvel!

Just goes to show that anything can happen in the wild world of comics. Now, if only we could get some Jim Lee pages for Ernie to ink. Oh, Bob. . .!

— "BIG BROADSWORD SWINGIN'"
BARRY DUTTER

ORCHESTRATING CHAOS: DEVELOPING OPERATION: GALACTIC STORM

Two civilizations, separated by the infinite expanse of the cosmos, put into motion the events that may result in the eradication of each other. A third plays the role of interloper, helping to foment war between the two. The fourth, an innocent in this high drama, faces its ultimate destruction because of this intergalactic power play.

This scenario provides the backdrop for what's been heralded as the most elborate super heroes at war-in-space epic ever attempted in comics history — OPERATION: GALACTIC STORM, THE KREE-SHI-AR WAR.

The mammoth crossover extravaganza can be followed in the pages of seven regular Marvel titles — AVENGERS WEST COAST, IRON MAN, CAPTAIN AMERICA, WONDER MAN, THOR, THE AVENGERS and QUASAR. OPERATION: GALACTIC STORM kicks off in January, 1992 in CAPTAIN AMERICA #398 and runs nineteen parts — reaching a bone-jarring conclusion in THE AVENGERS #347.

The action picks up with Shi'ar ruler, Princess Lilandra, thirsting to exact revenge on the military aggressions of the Kree. Her plan is to construct and activate a deadly bomb on her enemies, rendering them leaderless and in chaos. The Kree, however, have their own plans for further aggression. Representatives from both galaxies journey to the Earth-bound tomb of Marvell to complete their respective plans, but in doing so cause tremendous disruptions in the normal activity of the Earth's sun when they pass through stargates to and from the Earth.

Enter the Avengers forces to figure out what's going on and put an end to the calamitous situation threatening the Sun and therefore, the planet Earth. The action takes to the outer reaches of the universe as the Skrulls also get involved — doing some rather dirty work to add to the war that's brewing. It comes down to the combined might of the Avengers against the three feuding cultures — a deadly, suicidal mission.

The storyline, laced with plenty of fist-pounding action, intrigue and twists, is highlighted by a revealing look at the Avengers members. Bitter divisions over the game plan it should pursue for this desperate undertaking cause rifts within the Avengers family and lead to a disturbing scrutiny of its policies and power structure.

OPERATION: GALACTIC STORM, as noted before, is the most ambitious space adventure crossover series ever undertaken. But Marvel is certainly no newcomer to the crossover genre, having recently chalked up successes with INFINITY GAUNTLET, INFERNO, ACTS OF VENGEANCE and SECRETWARS II. In fact, in recent years, Marvel annuals have been handled in a similar "family" crossover approach.

An obvious question that pops up is "why take on this chore which involves months of planning and coordination as does OPERATION: GALACTIC STORM? The question can be answered by looking at both the creative and marketing aspects of the Marvel approach.

From a creative standpoint, crossovers afford the writers and artists of the series an opportunity to work with new storylines. Paul Ryan, whose work in OPERATION: GALACTIC STORM will be seen in the pages of IRON MAN, remembers fondly his work on the ACTS OF VENGEANCE series, noting that "it was lots of fun — I had a chance to pencil some major villains that normally didn't appear in my regular series." Bob Harras, THE AVENGERS writer, cites this as "not only a chance to work with *characters* I usually don't, but because of the massive coordination required, to work with artists and editors I normally wouldn't."

Crossovers also feature characters that would otherwise not appear together. Super heroes and villains, whose appearances are often limited to a specific title or a small group of titles, now have a reason for reaching beyond these limitations. Once again, this gives the creators a further opportunity to develop and explore characterizations and dynamics which otherwise might not be addressed.

Roy Thomas, writer of AVENGERS WEST COAST, brings up another reason for doing crossovers, "Major events like this enable us a chance to tidy up the Marvel Universe, to show it as the coherent form it is. It's a further opportunity to validate this Universe we started

creating some thirty years ago." So the strengthening of Marvel continuity is also well-served by the crossover format.

The marketing angle also figures in as to why the crossover is a popular attention-grabber. The marketing of the Marvel line is driven by our perceptions of what we believe the readership wants — events, larger-than-life blowouts featuring a pantheon of favorite heroes and villains. Certainly OPERATION: GALACTIC STORM delivers on these fronts.

Marketing Manager, Sven Larsen, notes that crossovers "get people excited" and "increases by word-of-mouth the scope and inherent appeal of our interactive universe." Larsen takes the concept a bit further by saying that big doings such as this are "not just comic book reading — it's an *experience* of the event that makes for such an enjoyable time."

"OPERATION: GALACTIC STORM is the ultimate expression of the crossover format. It's the ultimate extension of the 'team book' concept. The Avengers family of titles are a natural," he adds.

Another marketing consideration is to expand the base of our readership. If a reader is picking up, say, two of the seven titles that will be involved in OPERATION: GALACTIC STORM on a regular basis, we're hoping that same reader will be willing to pick up the other titles in order to follow the series. If he likes what he sees in the crossover, we're keeping our fingers crossed that he'll continue reading his newer picks on an ongoing basis.

So now that you know what to expect and why we do it, let's get to the nitty gritty and fill you in on how we actually put together something like this intergalactic free-for-all. And if you think General "Stormin' Norman Schwarzkoff had his hands full with *Desert* Storm, read on loyal ones!

The seed for OPERATION: GALACTIC

STORM was sown at a meeting of head honchos from the editorial, sales and promotion departments. Once it was decided what titles the crossover was to affect, editorial picked up the ball and began the grueling process of hammering out the concept. The storyline for OPERATION: GALACTIC STORM was the brainchild of Executive Editor Mark Gruenwald.

A sketchy outline was then presented to the editors of the various titles — Ralph Macchio (AVENGERS, CAPTAIN AMERICA and THOR), Fabian Nicieza (WONDER MAN), Kelly Corvese (QUASAR) and me, Nel Yomtov (IRON MAN and AVENGERS WEST COAST). We all had comments and suggestions and presented them to Mark at a general meeting. Gruenwald then huddled with writer/editors Harras and Nicieza and together the three undertook the unenviable task of planning out the events which are to take place in each of the nineteen parts of the series. Their revised outline was circulated and followed by a full-scale and final meeting of all writers and editors at a one day retreat far from the maddening pace of the Marvel offices. Last minute changes in the story were made. Production is to begin.

Meanwhile, a name for the series was carefully chosen by editorial, sales and promo personnel and a design for the logo commissioned — letterer extraordinaire Ken Lopez's final rendition appears at the head of this article.

While editorial was hammering out its part, sales and promo were going full tilt on their respective fronts. Point-of-purchase materials and detailed storyline synopses were developed in order to get the word out to distributors and retailers. By the way, expect to see posters, header cards and deluxe Kree-Shi'ar "draft cards" at your local retailers when the series hits the stores!

The logistics of keeping the project going are awe-inspiring. Four editors must coordinate the work of about thirty creators — writers, pencilers, inkers, letterers and colorists. An immense amount of attention to detail goes into the work: storyline, continuity, character costumes and coloring must be carefully cross-referenced and maintained throughout the months of production.

Bob Harras calls the task "daunting" and notes that as a writer he "must carefully avoid the obvious problems that go along with writing characters with which he's not experienced." For Harras, these many weeks of preparation mean a lot of extra reading and phone time to make certain he's right on target with his plots and scripts.

Because each part of the crossover is carefully orchestrated to follow and then lead into another part, timing is critical. Creators and editors know that the publishing schedule will be unforgiving — there is no room for falling behind it.

And if this juggling act isn't enough, keep in mind that the regular non-OPERATION GALACTIC STORM storylines and sub-plots which have been running in these seven titles must still be addressed while our heroes are out on this slugfest in space. Whew!

That's it. We've crafted this tale with an epic storyline, powerful heroes and villains and a slam-bang conclusion. Each part of the series is designed to add a significant piece to the entire mosaic. Worth the effort? We think so, but as always, you folks are going to be the final judges. Check it out and let us know what you think.

— Nel Yomtov

Here's a bonus checklist for all you STORM watchers:

Part 1	CAPTAIN AMERICA #398 (ships 1/2)
Part 2	AVENGERS WEST COAST #80 (ships 1/2)
Part 3	QUASAR #32 (ships 1/9)
Part 4	WONDER MAN #7 (ships 1/9)
Part 5	AVENGERS #345 (ships 1/6)
Part 6	IRON MAN #278 (ships 1/23)
Part 7	THOR #445 (ships 1/23)
Part 8	CAPTAIN AMERICA #399 (ships 2/6)
Part 9	AVENGERS WEST COAST #81 (ships 2/6)
Part 10	QUASAR #33 (ships 2/13)
Part 11	WONDER MAN #8 (ships 2/13)
Part 12	AVENGERS #346 (ships 2/20)
Part 13	IRON MAN #279 (ships 2/27)
Part 14	THOR #446 (ships 2/27)
Part 15	CAPTAIN AMERICA #400 (ships 3/6)
Part 16	AVENGERS WEST COAST #82 (ships 3/6)
Part 17	QUASAR #34 (ships 3/13)
Part 18	WONDER MAN #9 (ships 3/13)
Part 19	AVENGERS #347 (ships 3/20)

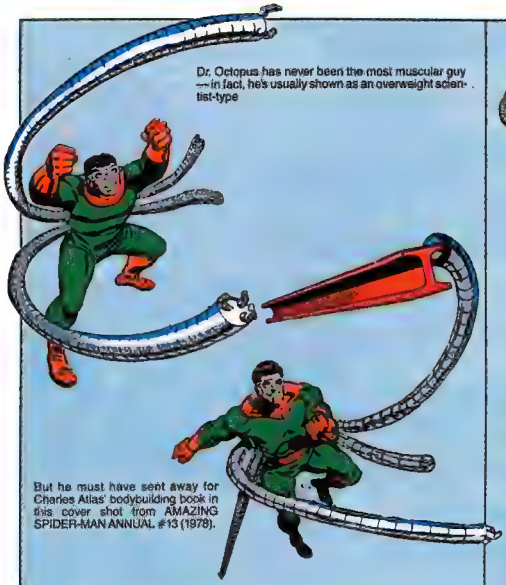
"GREAT" MOMENTS IN MARVEL HISTORY

Our topic this month is fitness! Do the Marvel heroes and villains work out — or don't they? Over the years, we've noticed that some of our characters have been portrayed as fat one month, and skinny the next, or skrawny one issue, and bulging with muscles the next time they appear.

We figure that some of our characters must work out from time to time, thus changing their physiques. Other characters, such as the Blob, must occasionally diet, in an attempt to slim down. This would explain why our characters don't always look the same every time they appear.

After all, it couldn't be our artists making mistakes now, could it? NAH!

— "Big Bulk-Bustin'" Barry Dutter

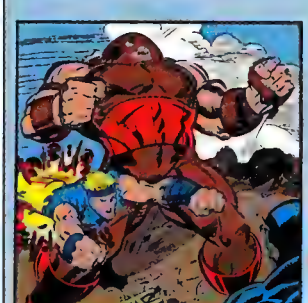


Dr. Octopus has never been the most muscular guy — in fact, he's usually shown as an overweight scientist-type

But he must have sent away for Charles Atlas' bodybuilding book in this cover shot from AMAZING SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #13 (1978).

When he was a kid, Cyclops was known as "Slim" Summers, because of his slender physique (depicted here by John Byrne on the cover of X-MEN #138).

But apparently Cyclops has been known to bulk up a little, as depicted in this Jim Lee drawing from X-MEN #4



The Juggernaut has always been proud of his considerable bulk: he's 900 pounds of solid muscle! (At least, he claims it's muscle, and we're not going to argue with him!) But he seems to have slimmed down to about half that weight in this cover shot from NEW WARRIORS #13. Perhaps that Nutra-System really does work!

Now here's the old Juggy we know and love, as depicted on the cover of X-MEN (original series) #32. Juggy truly is an unstoppable force, one who laughs at the Blob's pathetic 510 pound frame. And, he laughs at the Kingpin's puny 450 pound bod, telling him to "Come back when you've gained a few pounds!" However, he has been known to cringe in fear at the Slug's 1,068 pound superstructure. But Juggy hasn't given up! He promises the Slug, "Someday. . ."

Hembeck's Holiday Fun

Once again, the HOLIDAY SEASON is upon us. Everyone is caught up in the YULETIDE SPIRIT, even the LIVING LEGEND of WORLD WAR TWO! Let's look in on AVENGERS MANSION where, just as he does each year, CAPTAIN AMERICA is about to read a HOLIDAY CLASSIC to a small group of ORPHANS. This year his selection is—

"'Twas the Night Before Christmas"...

HEARD IT.

BOR-RING.

Don't you know any OTHER YULETIDE TALES, Colonel?

That's "CAPTAIN", honey.

Would you rather I tell you about EBANEEZER SCROOGE, JACOB MARLEY and the 3 GHOSTS?

Gee, we know THAT one, too!

Don't you have any Christmas stories about YOURSELF?

About... ME?..

YEAH! You MUST'VE had SOME exciting adventures during the Christmas season!?

Well, actually, there WAS this one time back in December of 1943. Remember, kids, this was LONG before I was FROZEN in that block of ice for DECADES.

TELL US, CORPORAL!

Yes, PLEASE!!

That's "CAPTAIN", sweetie.

Y'see, Bang, back then, the United States was pitted against GERMANY during WORLD WAR TWO. The Christmas season was particularly SOMBER for everyone in this country that winter, and the ONLY thing the boys and girls had to look forward to was OLD SAINT NICK'S visit on the 24th.

Now, the ENEMY knew this, and thus, in an attempt to DESTROY our nation's MORALE, do you KNOW what they DID?

NO— WHAT?

SANTA CLAUS--CAPTURED BY THE NAZIS!
"I was SHOCKED when President Roosevelt ~ America's beloved FDR--described the situation to me. The TOP ELF was elfless~er, HELPLESS~in the clutches of EVIL.
"Let me tell you, children, it wasn't long before BUCKY and I~accompanied by SGT. NICK FURY and his heralded HOWLING COMMANDOS--were behind ENEMY LINES on a desperate RESCUE MISSION.
"We soon LOCATED Father Christmas, and made quick work of his CAPTORS, only to be confronted by one of the most BONE CHILLING sights I've EVER had the MISFORTUNE to witness--
"There stood SANTA CLAUS, looking far LESS jolly than I'd ever seen him, a German Mauser being held to his HEAD by none other than Der Furher himself--
ADOLF HITLER?!
..I'll be G!@#ed...
Gee, you mean HITLER wasn't just a guy in the MOVIES and COMIC BOOKS, Commander? There REALLY WAS such a guy?..
YES, VIRGINIA, THERE WAS AN ADOLF HITLER...
HEY! My name's NOT "Virginia"!?..
Yeah? Well, I'm NOT a Colonel, a Corporal OR a Commander, either, so I guess that makes us EVEN, Kiddo.
Did I mention that to COMMEMORATE the Holiday Season, the Howlers agreed to MODIFY their trademark WAR CRY one time only from "WAH-HOO!" to "WAH-HO-HO-HO!"?..
...Do you know the one about the GRINCH?

MARK'S REMARKS

Mark - head by Harry Candelario

You may recall that every other month or so for three columns already, I've been addressing the concept of Marvel's unsolicited submissions and have been doing what is virtually never done by Marvel's over-worked, over-stressed, and over-the-top editorial crew — namely, working with an aspiring writer who's submitted an unsolicited plot synopsis in the attempt to make said plot publishable. Why this is so seldom done is because our editors would prefer to work with material that is 95% "there" and try to make it a whopping 50% better. There is just not enough time in a week for us to work with everyone with potential.

But in Marvel's fan magazine, anything can happen sometimes, so I selected a plot out of a pile that MARVEL AGE assistant editor Mike Lackey gave me, a plot that showed promise, but was not "there" yet. The unsolicited plot submitter in question is one Jean-Jacques Dzialowski of Paris, France, and let me tell you, J-J, you've been a real sport about this, letting me mercilessly tear apart the work that you've put heart and soul into before the eyes of greater Marveldom. It takes guts, folks, and that's something I admire. We're on our first revision of our third completely different plot right now, the first two having problems that would necessitate total makeovers, and in the previous draft of this plot for a 5-page story, J-J had Spider-Man and Paladin take on the Trapster and Flag-Smasher. The chief problem I had with it was that it was way, way too cramped, and would be improved were one of the heroes dropped from the scenario. J-J obliged, and so without further ado, is his latest plot revision. . .

Plot for 5 pages featuring Spider-Man "Smashing Party"

"Que desiderat pacem, praeparet bellum"
"Let him who desires peace prepare for war" VEGETIUS, De Re Militari.

1: Horizontal panel across the top of the page representing the world-famous Avenue des Champs-Elysées indicates that the action is taking place in Paris, France. A second horizontal panel focusing on the American Embassy located behind the aforementioned Avenue, next to the Place de la Concorde, makes it clear that the drama will actually unfold inside the walls of the four-storied mansion, which is being hastily surrounded by the police force.

We should see the police guards scurrying around while a C.R.S. Commando (short for Compagnie Républicaine de Sécurité, the Républican Troops in charge of Public Security, France's counter-terrorist unit) are plotting their assault on the embassy, which has been invaded by six men belonging to the terrorist organization known as the Underground Liberated Totally Integrated Mobile Army To Unite Mankind-ULTIMATUM. As far as is known, their leader is apparently the American criminal, former FRIGHTFUL FOUR member Peter Petruski, better known as the Trapster; a large number of people, diplomats and others, are being held hostage and the event, which occurs at the end of a sunny morning, has attracted the people from the Press and Television.

The rest of the page is a big powerful establishing shot of Spider-Man holding onto a webline and kicking the Trapster in the face. It should be done in such a way as to have a front view of both the characters' costumes to immediately introduce their outlook and specific features, consequently defining who is who. This takes place in a large room inside the embassy.

2: Spider-Man lands safely between the hostages (who keep back at the far end of the room) and the Trapster, now lying down helplessly (back to Spidey), astounded to find the wall-crawler in Paris. Close in on the Trapster's grimacing face as he remembers that after his defeat at the hands of the web-spinner a while back, he decided to leave the United States because he thought the place was crowding with too many so-called super-heroes for his comfort. He retreated to Paris where he thought he could easily gain money without any hero barring the way and thus make up for all his past defeats.

But it seems that the web-slinger keeps coming to haunt him. The Trapster, on the brink of insanity, turns back and tries to paste up Spidey with his right wrist shooter. Easily dodging the blast thanks to his danger-warning Spider-sense and super-human reflexes, Spidey uses his web-shooters to clog his opponent's blasters and punches him knock-out for the count.

As Spidey goes to free the hostages, he suddenly turns his head towards us as his spider-sense starts tingling. We should see behind him the hostages' faces, on which one can see relief turning into initial fear.

3: The real mastermind behind this daring action is now revealing himself: the Flag-Smasher, accompanied with three ULTIMATUM members, points a machine-gun at the hostages and threatens to kill one of them if Spidey does not surrender immediately. The latter, as the responsible man he is, has no other choice than comply with the Smasher's order. Two ULTIMATUM guards hold Spidey in check, pointing their machine-guns at him while the third one points his at the hostages to discourage any attempt by Spider-Man to go against the Smasher's will. Close in on the Smasher's face as he explains to Spidey his intention to reach world peace and unity through revolutionary violence.

But this goal cannot be achieved without money, which Smasher is precisely lacking now, having spent all his father's inheritance to finance and improve his vast organization (unknowingly on behalf of the Red Skull, who truly masterminded ULTIMATUM) over its few years of existence. As a consequence of his repeated failures, the parties which originally supplied him with his weaponry arsenal refused to lend him the money necessary to prepare for a *grand coup d'éclat* that would make up for the errors of the past.

Anyway, Smasher, devised a cunning scheme to get the money he needed while carrying out his grand coup at the same time. Resorting to insider help, he invaded the embassy to hold the diplomats hostage and ask a large amount of money for their liberation. Getting it, he and his group would go innocently out (without their outfits) passing as the first freed hostages and while someone would stay inside to make the police believe the terrorists to be still in the place. Someone foolish enough to accept the role. The Trapster would be that person, the colorful figure one would easily take for leader.

Just like Smasher, Trapster was defeated by the American Sentinel of Liberty, Captain America. (This is why Smasher chose to attack the embassy of his former opponent's country.)

Smasher would use the unsuspecting Trapster as bait, leaving him to his fate while he and his group (among which is a woman who would simulate pregnancy as a means to get the money secretly out) would safely get out. Also, in the one same stroke, Smasher would rob all the top secret papers he would find, to dismantle or cripple international intelligence services. Finally, upon leaving, they would detonate a time-bomb to destroy the embassy.

This guy's a real nut case! Spidey thinks, knowing only a small part of the whole strategem. It wasn't exactly the idea of enjoying my stay in Paris I had in

mind! Spidey briefly recaps that Peter Parker, his alter-ego, was sent to the French Capital City to take photographs for the Daily Bugle, the newspaper for which he is working as a freelance photographer in New York. I'll decide on your fate later, Smasher says, for now, matters of greater importance require my attention. He goes out of the room, leaving behind him the three guards, who keep Spidey and the hostages under surveillance. We should see two other guards — the last two men of the small terrorist unit, comprised of six members — posted right outside of the room, in front of the door. (It should be noted that Smasher went into the embassy outfitted as an ULTIMATUM member.)

4: As Smasher walks away in the corridor (back to us), his thoughts focus on the proceeding of his plan. Close in on his side-face as he broods over the next step of his machination, thus allowing us to learn the full low-down of his devious ploy. A sudden noise coming out of the room where the prisoners are kept shatters his self-assurance.

Rushing back towards the room and seeing that the two guards are missing, Smasher grabs his machine-gun and slowly opens the door, ready for anything. To his surprise, Spidey and the hostages have vanished. The five guards, along with the Trapster, are lying down, unconscious and side by side. The room is plunged into absolute silence. Smasher carefully comes in, suspecting Spider-Man not to have left the place.

As Smasher turns around, a webline snatches his weapon and throws it out of arm's reach. What Smasher sees before him is Spidey clinging to the wall above the doorway, looking at him. Bright boy here must really be surprised! Did he really expect the ever-amazing Spider-Man to be kept prisoner by five armed goons? Who did he take me for? The ever-amazing Mighty Mouse? Getting rid of my watchdog while my webbing relieved the other two of their weapons was a piece of cake, just as punching their tickets was. No sweat for the freed hostages who went on the balcony outside whose doorway I barred with my web, itself masked by the curtain, just in case. . .

The two remaining bonked heads provided company to their lonely friends. . . All in a minute's work for your neighborhood web-spinner! But I better let Flaggie here figure it out all by himself. . .!

5: Knowing how much there is at stake for him and realizing that Spidey could be an opponent as great as Captain America (as well as lacking an offensive weapon), Smasher resorts to the better part of valor: escaping. But that was underestimating Spidey's super-human reflexes, who covers the doorway below him with a web fence. Tell me Flaggie, you don't already want to leave? Blast you! Smasher furiously says, using his tear-gas gun on Spidey who jumps to safety. Running for his machine-gun, Smasher trips over a webline Spidey just put across the floor and knocks his head out against the wall, which causes the French and American flags that were proudly standing before it to fall down on him. And one Flag-Smasher flag-smashed! Spidey shouts. Ha ha, as Sting would say, I can't stand losing! Too bad I can't share all the fun with Flaggie! With all his big talks against nationalism and disunity, two flags working in common nailed him! The nations are united, indeed! This one sure was a laugh! Now I. . .Hey but. . .I'm trapped here!

"Peace hath her victories no less renowned than war"
John Milton, To Cromwell

Me again. The good news is. . .this second draft is the requisite 95% there. Congratulations, J-J! Here are my editorial comments that if we were doing this freelancer-to-editor instead of in a public forum like this would be scrawled in the margin of your manuscript.

Page one: Let's collapse the two establishing shots of the setting into one in order to make room for the big splash image of Spider-Man encountering the Trapster. A caption proclaiming "The American Embassy in Paris, France' next to a small picture of same is all the visual establishment necessary here. Some editors, who hate multi-panel splashes worse than me, would have you cut both insert panels and let the caption suffice. I'll be generous.

Page two: Fine, except I'd have Spider-Man have his thought balloon about why he happens to be in Paris here rather than on the next page. Here's why. . .

Page three: Still extremely crowded. I divided this page up according to how much I figured could fit into one panel comfortably and came up with 9 panels. (Aside to the readership: Divide up page three yourselves and see how many panels you come up with, just for the

exercise of it.) That's too much to get onto one page, particularly the talk-heaviest page of the story (the villain states his motivation and plan here). Cutting Spider-Man's one-panel reaction helps a bit. I'd also trim Flag-Smasher's speech down by at least one panel: some of that exposition is not needed. Once we get to the script stage, you can grapple with the bare minimum of verbiage to get the basic idea across.

Flag Smasher seems like an idiot, turning his back on Spider-Man and saying, "I'll deal with you later." As F-S's creator, I can tell you he's not an idiot. To fix it, we need not alter the visuals, however. In the script, what he should say here is, "Guards, eliminate Spider-Man. I've got more important work to do."

Page four: A script change necessitated by the alteration on page three. Once again, it doesn't affect the visuals. Instead of Flag-Smasher hearing a sudden noise that causes him to go and investigate, it's when he doesn't hear the machine gunning of Spider-Man that he runs back to investigate. Spider-Man will have to explain here that he waited to make his move until he was led away from the group of hostages. Once they were out of the line of fire, he made his move, overpowering the ULTIMATUM agents. Now for a change of art: I'd have Spider-Man make contact with F-S here. Shooting webs is fun and all, but the audience wants contact sports between the two major players and we ought to deliver (or else come up with something even cooler so they don't notice — another webbed-up gun is not it).

Page five: I'd have F-S get one good lick in here or else it looks like he was a pushover and not really worth Spider-Man working up a sweat over. He's getting trounced six ways from Sunday here and looks like a stumblebum. The ending, with the two flags bonking F-S on the head, is cute and ironic, but I wish it didn't just happen. Better that Spider-Man caused it to happen with his webs.

Okay, so with minor alterations we have something we can send to our artist (already selected) to draw. Step one accomplished. Ta-daaa.

Now that we've debugged the flow of action, let me step back for a moment and make some comments about the story in general. To be brutally honest, what we have here is pretty standard super hero fare, an action-packed five-pager with one tight spot (saving the hostages) which we mostly accomplish off-panel. Though Flag-Smasher's motivations are not the standard super-villain's, his plans and actions are. Spider-Man doesn't address or challenge F-S's ideology in the least (it might have been interesting to know what S-M makes of his philosophy), all he does is try to thwart F-S's actions. There is very little if anything new in this story beyond the fact that F-S and S-M have never encountered one another before.

It would have been nice if there had been at least one thing in it that we'd never seen before, that opened our jaded eyes with the shock of the new. It doesn't have to be much, a very clever usage of power, a novel image, or a particularly insightful exchange of ideas would suffice. I don't know what this one thing should be: it's not my story. This is an ideal all writers should strive for in every story, regardless of length: to bring something new to the game, something unexpected, something interesting, something touching, something human. . .whatever. It can't always be done, I guess. But the writers who can do this most consistently are the ones we remember. Is this something that has to be thought out before proceeding with a story? Not necessarily. But it should be something that comes out by the time the story's complete. So what happens if you finish a story and find out that there's nothing new in it. Scrap it? Well, that's up to the individual writer. In the case here, since this is a learning exercise and we don't want to remain locked at the starting gate forever, we will proceed minus this essential ingredient. Who knows, perhaps it will occur in the drawing or scripting stage. Comics is an additive, collaborative medium after all. We'll see when we follow up on this ongoing process two columns from now.

What's that? My column ran short this time? Now that's unusual. Okay, okay, I'll give the readers their money's worth, a full dose of M's Rems. Let's see, what can I talk about? Oh, I know — I've just the thing.

This past weekend my 6-year-old daughter Sara was helping me construct the Pinhead Cenobit model I'd gotten for my birthday several months ago, and in an effort to not let the horrific image of the HELLRAISER character make too intense of an impression on her, I suggested we make up Pinhead jokes. Here are some of our better ones:

1. What's Pinhead's favorite outfit?
2. Why did Pinhead's girlfriend leave him?
3. Who's Pinhead's favorite president?
4. Why does Pinhead always finish everything he starts?
5. What's Pinhead's favorite car?
6. Why does Pinhead lose every race he enters?
7. What is Pinhead's favorite soup?
8. Why is Pinhead bad at wrestling?
9. Why is Pinhead popular at parties?
10. Who is Pinhead's favorite female singing group?

What's that? You want me to stop? I've filled up enough space? Okay. You're the boss, Renee. I'm just the columnist. (Folks, if you've got any good Pinhead jokes, Sara and I would love to hear them! Write me in care of this magazine!)

— Mark Gruenwald

ANSWERS

1. His pinstripe suit. 2. He kept needling her. 3. Polk. 4. He's got stick-to-it-iveness. 5. Pinto. 6. He's pokey. 7. Chicken needle soup. 8. He likes to be pinned to the mat. 9. He always spikes the punch. 10. The Pointer Sisters.

THE JOE SINNOTT INTERVIEW

Joe in his studio in the late 1950's.

To say that Joe Sinnott is "an inker" would be a gross understatement. His work has appeared in virtually every Marvel title, on every Marvel character, and over every major Marvel artist since the company's Timely roots in the early 1950's. Joe recently retired from active duty, preferring now to take it easy, and perhaps do a few select projects a year.

Marvel recently honored Joe's 65th birthday and 40-plus years in the business at the chic and elite *Americas Cafe* in Manhattan, and Marvel's entire editorial team was there, munching Cajun specialities and ice cream sundaes. During the course of these events, MARVEL AGE was there, and arranged for this exclusive retrospective from the man himself.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: *Good afternoon, Joe. Let's start off with an easy one. . .how did you first come to appreciate comics, and how did you get your start?*

JOE SINNOTT: Well, like most people in comics, I've been drawing all of my life. I loved to draw as a youngster, and I was fascinated with the comic strips. *Flash Gordon, Terry and the Pirates, Smiling Jack,* and the artist, Roy Crane. There were many more, too.

So I started by reading the comic strips, this was in the 1930's, and I was about 8 or 9 years old. Of course, unlike the comic books of today that go from month to month, the comic strips were daily, and the stories carried over from one day to the next. They were great cliffhangers, and I could never wait to see what happened next. It was an interesting period to grow up in, to see these stories happening. Now, I look back as an adult, and I see that it was also an interesting period for the graphic arts.

I drew a lot in high school, and was the art director of our class yearbook. Besides that, there were no other outlets for me as an artist. My school only had two art classes, and they were Representation and Design. There was never any chance to learn anatomy.

Then, after I got out of the service after World War II, I worked in a cement plant, that my dad had worked in for 42 years. During that time I checked around, until I found Burne Hogarth's Cartoonist and Illustration School. This was in March of 1949. I showed Burne my comic strip samples, and he thought they were terrific. I thought he was pulling my leg. The school was up on 89th Street in Manhattan, and now it's down on 23rd, and re-named The School of Visual Arts.

MAM: *Who were some of your contemporaries?*

JOE: Marie Severin, Wally Wood and John Verpoorten. Herb Trimpe, a few years later. My instructor was a man named Tom Gill. He had several comic book accounts, and was a prodigious worker. He liked my work, and after about a month, asked me to join his bullpen. He had only asked one other student in my class, and myself. He had a studio out on the Island, and we would travel out there every weekend to work. We'd do Westerns, Cowboy and Indian stories. Even some very early Marvel work: *Kent Blake, Detective* and *Red Warrior.*

MAM: *What was your earliest work for Marvel?*

JOE: I'd say that would have to be the *Red Warrior* strip. You see, Tom would do all of the heads. We'd do everything else. We'd do the backgrounds, and the figures, but since they were Tom's accounts, he'd do the heads so it looked like his work. I did this for about 9 months. It was great learning.

MAM: *Did you get paid by the page?*

JOE: Sure, just like artists today. We made $10 a page for pencils, and another $8 for inking or finishes. It was very good pay, for back then. Not like what some of these fellas earn today, but still pretty good. That, and my G.I. Bill really helped out. Many other guys were on a tight shoestring.

Joe's inks over Sal Buscema's pencils for the MARVEL ACTIVITY BOOK.

MAM: *And after your 9 months at the Gill Studio?*

JOE: It was very tiring, taking the Long Island Railroad every weekend, and working all Saturday and Sunday. This was on top of going to school, as well! So, I began working at my room on 75th Street for $7 a week. Soon, I was doing much more work, doing it all. A little bit of my style began to creep in. Of course, I was younger, and I had gotten a bit cocky. I was thinking, "I can get accounts by myself!" I can never have enough good to say about Tom Gill. He gave me my start.

MAM: *So what happened?*

JOE: I prepared some samples and brought them to Stan Lee. These were things he was already buying from Tom, so I got work immediately. And so, all through the 1950's Marvel, or Timely as it was known then, was the only company that I worked for.

MAM: *What sort of work were you getting?*

JOE: We'd do 5- or 6-page stories, then. Back then, most comic books had several short stories, rather than one book-length story. Stan would give me a script on Friday, I would pencil and ink it, and then bring it back in the next Friday, and start all over.

MAM: *Were you doing all monster stuff, or war or western comics?*

JOE: It was a variety, a great variety. Romance, detective, Korean war comics. . . all the popular trends. I rode the horror trend, from 1951-53. STRANGE TALES, JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY, all of those great books. The horror was fun, drawing all of the weird worlds and all. Stan did most of the writing, not all, but most. They were simple stories, with great endings.

MAM: *It was a great period for comics . . .they were very innocent, even the grisly EC's. . .*

JOE: Sure. They were all formula, though. Sometimes, I'd run across a western. And as I was drawing it, I'd realize that I'd done it before as a science-fiction piece!

MAM: *And then came the Comics Code...*

JOE: Yes, well, that whole period of 1957-58 was very bad. It was right after the Wertham thing, and in April 1957, comics were in very big trouble. Stan had a backlog of material, already finished, so he wasn't buying any new work. At this time, Jack Kirby had been working there steadily, as were John Severin, Don Heck and Steve Ditko.

Stan had started doing monster comics now, and they helped Marvel some, but comics were in bad shape. Our rates had been cut about in half.

MAM: *Comics are a collaborative art form. What was the creative process like back then?*

JOE: Well, Stan relied on your ability to tell a story. He didn't really need to see your pencils until they were finished. . . he trusted you. There was a small art staff to make any corrections. I did about one story a week. I'd pencil a page in the morning, then ink it in the afternoon.

MAM: *One 5- or 6-page story a week?*

JOE: Yes, about 300 pages a year, maybe 3,000 pages during the 1950's. It was a great, fun time to work. The variety made it even more challenging.

MAM: *You've mentioned that. How was it determined what piece you would do?*

JOE: Generally speaking, Stan had a stack of scripts on his desk. He'd take whatever was on top of the pile, and that's the story you'd do. It was very nonchalant. Stan liked to have his people to be able to do all sorts of work.

It was a looser schedule, then, too. Fewer pressures. Since there was no continuity from issue to issue, as all the stories were short 5- or 6-pagers, if you were late they could always bump it back. Your STRANGE TALES story for #53 could easily be in #54 or #55.

MAM: *With some of our deadlines around here, that sounds like a dream!*

JOE: Yeah, but if you ask anybody working in that period, nobody was on salary. We were freelancers. We had no protection. So in 1957, and things were really tough, I was out there doing newspaper strips on spec. I did some work at *Classics Illustrated*.

There is no part of my career I regret, except for that period of time. It was a bad period. Very traumatic, since a lot of guys had to drop out of comics altogether. Virtually all of the companies, except DC, went out of business.

MAM: *Let's go forward, now. How did you hook up with Jack Kirby?*

JOE: In 1959 I was doing monsters, and Stan called me about doing a Kirby western. It was a 5-pager, really nothing to it, as far as inking goes. I think it was a TWO GUN KID. I still remember the title, *Outlaw Man From Fargo*. Stan liked what he saw, so he offered me another Kirby, this one was 6 pages.

More Kirby work followed, a monster book Jack had done, called *I Was Trapped By Titano*. Stan loved those crazy names. And I always thought that Jack's work was inspired on those strips.

MAM: *So, what happened next?*

JOE: It seemed like every time Stan had Kirby work, he'd give it to me. One day he called me for FANTASTIC FOUR #5. Now, I didn't know that FF #1-4 even existed. I didn't go to the city much, I was mailing in most of my work by that point. If I knew my work was in a book, I'd go to the dime store and get just that book.

Anyway, FF #5 was the original Doctor Doom story. I thought that Stan and Jack's creation of the Thing was unbelievably great. I always thought there was a lot of Jack in the Thing. I know that Spider-Man is Marvel's watershed character, but I still think that the Thing is Stan and Jack's greatest creation. He even looked like Jack.

But back to the book. The art was great, plus other stuff, that made the book really terrific. As you know, they go back in time, and become pirates for Doctor Doom, which brought me right back to my childhood with *Terry and the Pirates*.

MAM: *Then you left FF for a while. . .*

JOE: Yes, I didn't come back until #44, which featured Gorgon. Stan really liked that one, and offered me the book on a regular basis. I got a nice raise, and we did a nice string of issues. Up until about issue #93, at which point, I needed a vacation. Frank Giacoia did a few issues after that.

MAM: *Are you able to get to the conven-*

tions very often?

JOE: Sometimes, if they're close. Sometimes, I'll be at a convention and a fan will ask, "How did you like working on *this book* or *with that guy*? And I'll be like, "I never worked on *that book* or with *that guy*!" You have a tendency to forget after so many years, especially if you only did a book once. I'd never forget THOR or the FF, but maybe some of the smaller things.

MAM: *But, you enjoy the cons?*

JOE: Sure. Like I said, I don't come to the city regularly, and haven't since about 1960. I did all my talking with Stan on the phone. I hated the hassle. I mailed all my work in. Then, in 1975 or '76, Stan formed the Marvel Convention, and they invited me down. It was very well presented, and the first time I'd seen Stan since about 1958.

They had a panel of us old-timers, like John Buscema, John Romita and myself. And Stan hadn't seen me in so long, he didn't recognize me. . .he thought I was a guy named Jack Keller! I thought Stan was pulling my leg!

I didn't come back until the Shooter days. Shooter kept begging me to come down, and I kept putting him off. I told him I'd be down in October, and then, it's October 31st, and the phone rings and it's Jim. He tells me, "Hey, it's October 31st, so get down here already!"

It wasn't that I didn't want to go, but traveling into New York is a hassle. I came down with my wife, and we split up for the day, because I thought it would just be boring shop talk. I told her to meet me at Gimbels department store at 11am, so we could catch an early train back.

Well, I get there and there are all kinds of streamers, and a buffet table, and a cake! It was a big party in my honor, and my wife is at Gimbels! There was no way for me to get in touch with her, and we didn't meet up until about 5pm!

So, even when we all had lunch last week, it was great to see everybody. I only wish that I had more time to talk with everybody.

MAM: *You've worked with so many great artists over the years, Joe, it would probably be easier to list people you didn't work with! Tell us about the collabora-*

Poster art for the 1975 Marvel Convention, by John Buscema and Joe Sinnott.

tions you thought really sparkled.

JOE: There were so many that I really enjoyed. They were hard work, but I had a sense of accomplishment from them. Kirby was always a joy. I never thought it would end. He was a prodigious worker, he just gave everything to his work. I'd add little things, but then I'd always feel guilty about it later, thinking, "it's good, but it's not *Kirby*!" Stan didn't mind, though. He encouraged it.

John Buscema's work was always beautifully done. It's very loose, with great anatomy. His flow of action is undeniable. His art really spurred you on. Gene Colan was extremely fluid. . .very artistic. When we did CAPTAIN AMERICA together, Sol Brodsky would call me up just to say how much he enjoyed it. When you do good work, you figure, well, the old pros will know. But when Sol would call, it gave me a special satisfaction.

John Byrne was fairly excellent. John's a real cartoonist, very fun to work with. He made the work easy. Of course, John Romita. . .he's an old pro! He's a great cohort, a great collaborator!

Ron Frenz can take his place in my Top 5. When we were doing FF, it was great fun. Walt Simonson wanted a shot on FF, so we moved over to THOR. In fact, my one regret about leaving full time work is no longer working with Ron.

MAM: *Surely not every collaboration was magic?*

JOE: No, there were some difficult jobs over a less experienced artist, or a penciler whose style clashed with my own. I figure that everyone in comics is talented, or else they wouldn't be there in the first place. But different people take different time to develop. When I started with Rich Buckler on FF, it was very hard, but once we got into the swing of things, it became much easier.

I also liked Ron Wilson and Don Perlin. And of course, Sal Buscema. . .He's a real pro. We did ROM and HULK together. Sal's work always has the same quality to it. Always great! And John Severin, too. He's very versatile. He's the most accurate of any comics artist, and I can never say enough about him.

MAM: *How do you like your modern work, as compared to your older stuff?*

JOE: People grow. I feel my quality is just as good as it's always been, maybe even better than ever.

MAM: *When I told the Bullpen that we'd be doing this interview, everybody told me that I simply* ***must*** *find out what pens you use.*

JOE: Well, if a job isn't as good as what you've done in the past, and you're working as hard as you always have, it could be your equipment. About 6 months ago, Marvel got this really lousy paper. It was dreadful. The ink would either bleed, or lay on top of the page. It wouldn't sink in. It would just roll around on the page. It was very aggravating.

But mostly, you have control of what you want to work with. I like Pelican or Black Magic Higgins ink. It makes your originals very dark. Maybe I'll do a little mixing of the two, but rarely. My brush is a Windsor-Newton 37 #3. I've used that brush for so long! It's the only one I can use! Maybe a #2.

In the 60's and early 70's, we had bigger pages, and more room to work. The characters were big, and you could really get in there and do some work with the brush. Now, it seems everybody's in a group! The paper is smaller, the figures are smaller. . .it's tough. I have to use more pen, because of it.

I use a Hunt #102 pen now, and a Gillotte 659. I used that pen all through the 1950's. Also a ruler and a compass, but never a French curve. I'd always end up smearing my work when I used a French curve, so I do that stuff free hand. So I try and work two pages at once. While once page dries, I can work on the other.

MAM: *Let's go back a half-step. There's a lot of talk about the "PinUp Craze," where doing splashy full-page drawings seems to take the place of legitimate storytelling. What do you think of this fairly new phenomenon?*

JOE: I don't think it's new at all. Just the opposite! Years ago, Kirby always had big pinup pages in the middle of his books. Big machinery or huge heads. And they were extremely effective. Many readers looked forward to those pages. They were easy to do, and they still looked great small. Every panel in a Kirby book was like a splash page.

John Buscema was never very big on those pinup pages, though. I'd say John is the best draftsman Marvel's ever had, and Kirby is the best comic book artist, and the best storyteller.

MAM: *Okay, we talked about your favorite artists. What about your favorite characters?*

Left to Right: Cover Colorist George Roussos, Art Director John Romita, Joe Sinnott, "World"s Toughest Proofreader" Jack Abel,and Mrs. Betty Sinnott

JOE: That's a relief. I thought you were going to ask me about the worst artists!

Like I said, I loved the Thing. And Spider-Man. I'd say that generally the characters I'd worked on were my favorites. Thor, or course. I did the very first Thor with Jack Kirby, back in JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #83. Somehow, somebody else always got credit for inking that book, which was a shame because I really was proud of it. It's been reprinted six times with six different inkers getting credit, except me! When I found out about the MARVEL MASTERWORKS, I told them the story, and it's finally corrected.

MAM: *Some mistakes take longer to fix than others. But 30 years?*

JOE: It happens. It's correct, now. I'm happy.

MAM: *Will we see any more Joe Sinnott art in the future?*

JOE: Yes, special projects. I'm still doing some work for Bob Budiansky, Tom Brevoort and Bobbie Chase, penciled by Ron Frenz.

MAM: *Finally, Joe. Any words for aspiring artists?*

JOE: Yes. Get the best equipment you can afford. Get your work done. You've got to meet your deadline. You can have a great splash page, but if you peter out by the time you're on page 23, what does it matter? It's not an easy job. As Burne Hogarth said — every penny an artist makes, he *earns*.

— Mike Lackey

Welcome back to *Reel Marvel*, the column which focuses on Marvel's rich history of television and movie adaptations, both past, present, and future.

This is the second of five *Reel Marvel* columns (#108-112), providing a comprehensive guide to the 1965 *Marvel Super-Heroes* shows, all adapted directly from the comics of the day. Despite their limited animation, the shows have a cult following and video collectors and traders covet new and better copies of the many episodes.

Grant Simmons and Robert Lawrence joined together in 1965 as Grantray-Lawrence to produce the animated adventures of the *Marvel Super-Heroes*. The show premiered as a Saturday show on September 2, 1966 in Los Angeles, but was picked up as a daily show on the 12th in Chicago and other stations. *Captain America* was Monday, the *Incredible Hulk* was Tuesday, *Iron Man* was Wednesday, *Mighty Thor* was Thursday (naturally), and *Sub-Mariner* was Friday.

The cartoons were very limited in their animation, produced through a process called Xerography. Artwork was transferred directly from Marvel comics onto the animation cells, and then given a slight movement by jiggling the cell or sliding it across a background. Despite the cheap process, the show became a major hit, and still remains in syndication today.

Each show had thirteen three-chapter episodes. Each chapter had its own title, and was six minutes long. The *Incredible Hulk* stories were taken from comics drawn by Jack Kirby and Bob Powell, mostly from *Tales To Astonish* and early *Hulk* issues. The Green Goliath fought against such familiar baddies as the Chameleon, the Leader, the Toadmen, Tyrannus, the Metal Master, Ringmaster, and the Space Phantom!

Episode #1/#6201-6203 (from Tales to Astonish #60-62)
Brawn Against Brain (pt. I)
Captured At Last (pt. II)
Enter. . .the Chameleon (pt. III)

Working on a super-robot, Bruce Banner is tricked by a spy who steals it. After a fight with the Hulk, the spy finds Banner's desert lab and sets about making a gamma bomb. The Hulk is captured by Major Talbot, but escapes in time to stop the Chameleon, mastermind behind the whole operation. Smothering the gamma bomb with his body, Hulk is a hero.

Episode #2/#6204-6206 (from Tales to Astonish #63-65)
A Titan Rides the Train (pt. I)
The Horde of Humanoids (pt. II)
Hulk on the Rampage (pt. III)

Transformed by the gamma radiation, the Leader creates a race of Humanoids. The Hulk stops them from hijacking a nuclear bomb, but is later overwhelmed by the rubbery Humanoids on Astora Island. Though the Hulk escapes and helps win the day, General Ross labels our hero a traitor!

Episode #3/#6207-6209 (from Tales to Astonish #66-68)
The Power of Dr. Banner (pt. I)
Where Strides the Behemoth (pt. II)
Back from the Dead (pt. III)

Bruce Banner has been kidnapped and taken behind the "Iron Curtain." After fighting the "evil army," he later changes back into Banner and is taken captive by a group of Oriental bandits. Major Talbot arranges his ransom, but as Talbot and Banner escape, they fall from a cliff! Though the Hulk saves Talbot and returns to base, Banner is later accused of being a traitor! The Hulk eventually makes it appear as if Banner has rescued Talbot from him, clearing Bruce of traitorous charges.

Episode #4/#6210-6212 (from Tales to Astonish #69-71)

12¢
THE INCREDIBLE
HULK
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
MC
6
MAR
EVEN YOUR LIMITLESS STRENGTH CANNOT SAVE YOU FROM ME, HULK! ALL THE METAL ON EARTH IS MINE TO COMMAND, FOR I AM--
"THE METAL MASTER!"
IF THE HULK CAN'T HANDLE THE METAL MASTER, IT COULD MEAN THE END OF THE HUMAN RACE!
A FULL-LENGTH EPIC SUPER-THRILLER!

Micro Monsters (pt. I)
The Lair of the Leader (pt. II)
To Live Again (pt. III)

A sequel to episode #2, this finds Bruce and Talbot testing the Absorbitron on Astora Island, when the Leader and his Humanoids capture the device and the Hulk! Though he changes back to Banner while in the Leader's custody, Bruce gets a message to Rick Jones who shows up with the Army. In the resulting battle, Rick is mortally wounded, but the Hulk saves his life with a "great inner power."

Episode #5/#6213-6215 (from The Incredible Hulk #1)
Origin of the Hulk (pt. I)
Enter the Gorgon (pt. II)
To Be a Man (pt. III)

Bruce saves a young Rick Jones from a gamma bomb explosion, becoming the Hulk in the process. When a rival scientist, Igor, attempts to get the gamma bomb plans, the Hulk and Rick Jones foil him. Igor gets a message to his own country and the fearful Gorgon, about the Hulk. The Gorgon comes to America and fights the Hulk, only to be cured of his ugly disease by the Green Goliath.

Episode #6/#6216-6218 (from The Incredible Hulk #2)
The Terror of the Toadmen (pt. I)
Bruce Banner Wanted for Treason (pt. III)
Hulk Runs Amok (pt. III)

Hiding in his desert cave with Rick Jones, Banner is captured by the otherworldly Toadmen. The Hulk defeats them, but the Army shoots down the UFO they're in, and Banner is captured when the Toadmen tunnel underground. The Toadmen's armada magnetically pulls the moon towards Earth, causing great disasters. Eventually, Banner escapes imprisonment and manages to stave off the Toadmen's attack and save the Earth. Once again, he's cleared the traitorous charges by the Army.

Episode #7/#6219-6221 (from Avengers #2)
The Space Phantom (pt. I)
Sting of the Wasp (pt. II)
Exit the Hulk (pt. III)

Leaving an Avengers meeting, the Hulk is displaced by the Space Phantom, who takes his place and causes the break-up of the Avengers. Rick Jones finds out what is going on, but not before the Space Phantom takes over the Wasp, freeing Hulk. The Avengers unite to stop the Space Phantom, but the Hulk leaves the group, disgruntled with their attitudes towards him.

Episode #8/#6222-6224 (from The Incredible Hulk #5)
Enter Tyrannus (pt. I)
Beauty and the Beast (pt. II)
They Dwell in the Depths (pt. III)

Tyrannus captures Betty Ross and takes her underground, preparing to launch an attack on the surface. Though the Hulk stops him and escapes with Rick and Betty, Tyrannus enlists him in his battle against the Mole Man. Hulk helps Tyrannus regain his lost youth with an elixir, and separates the warring factions of the underground kingdoms.

Episode #9/#6225-6227 (from Tales to Astonish #77-)
Terror of the T-Gun (pt. I)
I. . .Against the World (pt. II)
Bruce Banner is the Hulk (pt. III)

"THE TERROR OF THE TOAD MEN!"
GENERAL! IT'S THEM! THE TOAD MEN! THEY'RE ATTACKING!
IT IS TOO LATE FOR THE HUMANS TO STOP US NOW! NOTHING CAN STOP US!
NOTHING, EXCEPT... THE HULK!!

When General Ross uses Bruce Banner's new invention, the T-Gun on the Hulk, our hero is transported into the future. There he fights a futuristic army and faces the god-like Executioner. The warrior can't defeat the Hulk so he sends him back in time, but not before Rick Jones has to tell Talbot Bruce's horrible secret!

Episode #10/#6228-6230 (from The Incredible Hulk #6)
The Incredible Hulk vs. Metal Master (pt. I)
The Master Tests His Metal (pt. II)
Mind Over Metal (pt. III)

The Metal Master invades the Earth and a slightly mutated Hulk must stop him. Rick Jones enlists his Teen Brigade to help. Using the intellect of Bruce Banner, the Hulk helps defeat the Metal Master by faking him out with a plastic "super weapon."

Episode #11/#6231-6233 (from The Incredible Hulk #3)
The Ringmaster (pt. I)
Captive of the Circus (pt. II)
The Grand Finale (pt. III)

The Ringmaster and his Circus of Crime capture Rick Jones to gain access to the Hulk. Through his telepathic link to the Hulk, Rick guides him to the circus to fight the criminals, then talks him into pretending to go along with them until more help can be summoned. The police arrive and arrest the Circus, and the Hulk escapes.

Episode #12/#6234-6236 (from Tales to Astonish #81-83)
The Man Called Boomerang (pt. I)
The Hulk Intervenes (pt. II)
Less Than Monster, More Than Man (pt. III)

The secret Empire hires Boomerang to steal the Orion Missile from General Ross's base. He kidnaps Betty along the way, but gives her up to the Hulk after a fight. When Boomerang attacks the Army base while they're out looking for Betty, Talbot stops him! Will the Hulk ever be a hero?

Episode #13/#6237-6239 (from Tales to Astonish #84-86)
Within the Monster Dwells a Man (pt. I)
Another World, Another Foe (pt. II)
The Wisdom of the Watcher (pt. III)

The Leader helps save the Hulk from a bullet wound, but implants a controlling device in his head! He wants to use the Hulk to capture secrets from the Watcher. With the enigmatic alien's help, the Hulk defeats the Leader once again!

Incredible Hulk fans wishing to view these shows will have to wait. None were released on Prism's *Marvel Comics Library*, and Best Video's new *Marvel Comics* line is releasing the newer *Hulk* episodes first. Sorry.

Next month, we continue our guide to the *Marvel Super-Heroes* with all jets ablaze and all the episodes to the cool exec with the heart of steel! Iron Man fights with his repulsor rays, next month in *Reel Marvel*!

1985 PART IV THE MARVEL® AGE OF COMICS 1985 PART IV

In 1985, some of Marvel's solo superstars were more solo than others. THE THING, for example, concluded a year's sabbatical on the Battleworld of the Beyonder, where he faced a bizarre assortment of threats, only to learn that his worst enemy was. . .himself! Returning to Earth, Ben's frustration with Reed Richards (who had never told him he had the power in his own mind to stop being the Thing) led him to leave the FF and take up a new career: as a professional wrestler! Of course, no one warned him that one of his first opponents would be the Beyonder!

Also beguiled by the Beyonder was DAREDEVIL, to whom the comic crossover artist temporarily gave the gift of sight! But this would be the major event of Matt Murdock's year. . .or would it be the suicide of his former flame, Heather Glenn? In tales by Denny O'Neil and David Mazzucchelli, the sightless swashbuckler also took on Micah Synn, the Gael, the Jester and the Vulture. Fortunately, he could count on an occasional hand from the Black Widow and, in a time-spanning story, the Two-Gun Kid!

And reeling from her ill-starred romance with the Beyonder was Alison Blaire, the DAZZLER. Ali's exploits in Hollywood brought her to grips with Revenge, Inc., the Tatterdemalion, and Deathgrip, in an adventure penciled by soon-to-be favorite Paul Chadwick. Bounty hunter O.Z. Chase became a unique friend to Dazz, and the X-Men put in a guest appearance, heralding the major role they would soon play in Ali's life.

SECRET WARS II played an unusual role in the loves of many heroes. The AMAZING SPIDER-MAN, for instance, saw Power Man and Iron Fist's office building turned into gold by the Beyonder. Should he stop the office workers from stealing chunks of the building for themselves — should he grab his own piece of the action? Presenting less complex moral dilemmas were the Hobgoblin and the Rose, as portrayed by the team of Tom DeFalco and Ron Frenz. Spidey battled one of his oldest foes, when Crusher Hogan returned — and one of his most lethal, when he took on none other than Firelord!

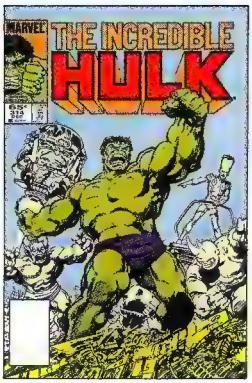
Over in his other series, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN grew progressively more daring and dramatic. Early stories featured the Spot, the Kingpin, Rocket Racer, and guest stars like Paladin and the Wasp. But by the end of the year, Pete was battling Nightmare, and searching for the killer of Jean DeWolff! THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL continued the grimmer trend, with the debut of Ace, a streetfighter who was as much Spidey's foe as he was his friend. And for those who needed still more Spider-action, classic Ditko and Romita renditions of the wall-crawler were the feature of MARVEL TALES.

Dr. Strange, Cloak and Dagger, the Hulk and Iron Man all received special treatment in MARVEL FANFARE, while their own series presented them with seemingly unending crises. DR. STRANGE couldn't even enjoy a sea cruise with the Black Knight without being impelled into mystic combat. Before he knew it, he was venturing into the Dark Dimension to assist Clea against Umar, while fending off the threat of the Beyonder back on Earth!

Stranded at the interdimensional crossroads, THE INCREDIBLE HULK seethed with a rage that had Dr. Strange helpless to assist, that had driven away all the Hulk's friends. . .except, perhaps, for the anomalous entity known as the Puffball Collective. From the Hulk's past, Xeron the Star-Slayer returned for action . . .but from Bruce Banner's past, scripter Bill Mantlo introduced us to even more important figures! Goblin, Guardian and Glow, representatives of Bruce's childhood fantasies and fears, gave us a new understanding of the man inside the monster. . .just in time for the coming of new scripter, John Byrne!

IRON MAN chronicled the return of Tony Stark to his redoubtable fighting armor, but only after fighting his best friend Rhodey for the honors! Rhodey had been driven a bit wacky by a side-effect of the armor, and only the help of Shaman and Hank Pym got him straight again. Other guest stars included the Scarlet Witch and Tigra, as IRON MAN barreled toward a 200th issue in which corporate usurper Obadiah Stane was defeated once and for all!

Iron Man and his fellow Avengers lent



a hand to Thor and Beta Ray Bill, as the legions of Surtur threatened to overwhelm the Earth! Odin took Surtur down for the count himself, but vanished along with the fire demon, leaving the leadership of Asgard in grave question! Lorelei nearly bewitched Thor to make him support Loki for the number one slot, but upon recovering, the Thunder God was off on more adventure — to free the victims of Malekith from the clutches of Hel! And as if the underworld of one mythology weren't enough, the THOR ANNUAL took Goldilocks into Mephisto's realm to free the brother of Ulik!

Thor's fellow Avenger, Captain America, wasn't exactly sunning himself in 1985, either. The Red Skull's funeral led Cap into combat against Mother Superior and her Sisters of Sin, while everything old became new again with a revamped Batroc's Brigade, including Zaran and Machete. Captain Britain, Nomad, Starfox and the Black Knight pitched in against Modred, Madcap, and the Armadillo. And as Mark Gruenwald began his yet-unbroken stint writing the star-spangled Avenger, the Serpent Society emerged as a lethal new threat. Gruenwald specialized early on in stories themed to Cap's image as protector of the American Dream, such as Cap's first skirmish with the Flag-Smasher.

The remainder of 1985 Marvel's solo heroes were licensed properties, characters owned by other companies who knew Marvel would do them justice. CONAN THE BARBARIAN garnered new allies for his Hyborian adventures: friends such as Tetra and Delmurio, and his old galleymate Fafnir. He'd need all the friends he could find when dealing with the Brotherhood of the Falcon and the time traveller Nostume! The magazine SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN also pitted Conan against the Brotherhood, as well as the venemous Boraq'h Sharak, the Iron Damsels, and Wrarri, the Devourer of Souls.

And in CONAN THE KING, a sadder but wiser Cimmerian fought alongside an older Red Sonja, defending his kingdom against invasion by the Picts and the machinations of Baron Maloric. RED SONJA also went monthly, as the she-devil swung her sword through adventures by such worthies as Bill Mantlo, Pat Broderick, Louise Simonson, and Mary Wilshire.

THE FURTHER ADVENTURES OF INDIANA JONES took the intrepid archaeologist across the world, in search of Bigfoot, the Tower of Tears, and Buffalo Bill's granddaughter! And a media of quite a different stripe, Dr. Who, found himself in ancient China as well as in the future, outwitting nemeses ranging from the Time Witch to the Dalek-Killer.

And the war against the Dire Wraiths finally came to an end in ROM, as the Spaceknight teamed with Forge to drive the aliens away from Earth for (hopefully) all time. But like many soldiers once the war is over, Rom now wondered what purpose his life carried. The answer was found in an expedition to find his home planet Galador, and to regain his human form. Yet the quest was rudely interrupted by Ego, the Living Planet, and — in the ROM ANNUAL — the Shi'ar!

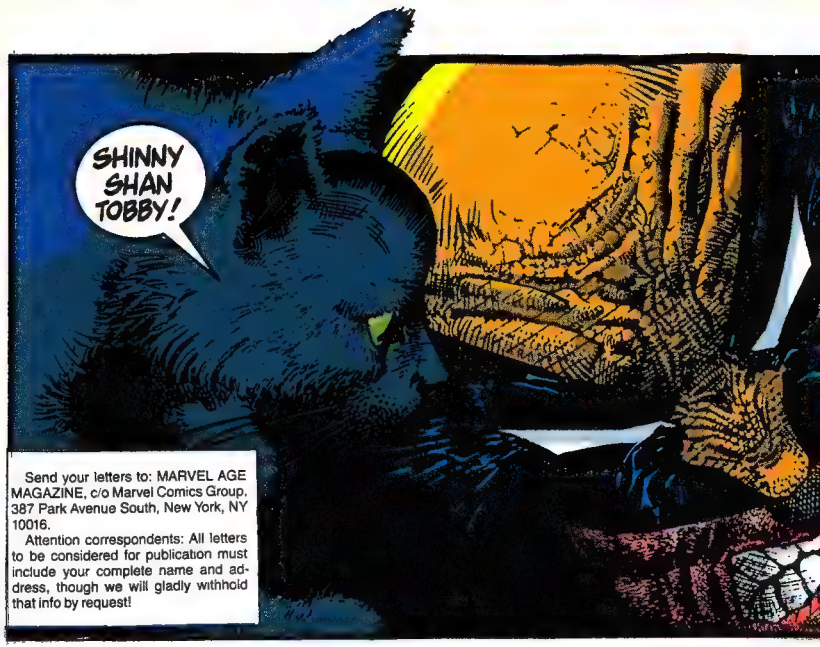
Join us next month, when we wrap up our look at 1985 with the musical question, "How Long Will a Man Lie in the Earth Ere He Rot?"

— Brian Nelson

MARVEL® COMICS PRICE GUIDE

"Yesterday. . .my comics waited till another day. . .now it looks as though there's cash to pay. . .Wish I'd bought them. . .yesterday!" If the prospect of visiting your local comics specialty shop has you singing that great old Beatles theme, here's a guide for what you can expect to pay for the Marvel Comics we recapped this month, as detailed by THE OFFICIAL OVERSTREET COMIC BOOK PRICE GUIDE #20. But remember: this is only a guide. Actual prices may vary, and should be lower for copies in fair or poor condition.

	CONDITION Good	Fine	Mint
■ **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN**			
260	.30	.95	1.90
261-271	.25	.75	1.50
ANNUAL 19	.40	1.20	2.40
■ **CAPTAIN AMERICA**			
301-312	.30	.90	1.80
■ **CONAN THE BARBARIAN**			
166-177		.50	1.00
■ **CONAN THE KING**			
26-31		.60	1.20
■ **DAREDEVIL**			
214-225		.50	1.00
■ **DAZZLER**			
35-37, 39-40		.50	1.00
38 (Wolverine)	.40	1.25	2.50
■ **DR. STRANGE**			
69-74		.60	1.20
■ **DOCTOR WHO**			
5-15	.35	1.00	2.00
■ **FURTHER ADVENTURES OF INDIANA JONES**			
25-32		.55	1.10
■ **INCREDIBLE HULK**			
303-313		.60	1.20
314 (Byrne begins)	.85	2.50	5.00
ANNUAL 14	.25	.75	1.50
■ **IRON MAN**			
190-199	.25	.75	1.50
200 (double-size)	.60	1.75	3.50
201	.25	.70	1.40
■ **MARVEL FANFARE**			
19-23	.35	1.00	1.95
■ **MARVEL TALES**			
171-182		.50	1.00
■ **PETER PARKER**			
98-99, ANNUAL 5	.25	.80	1.60
100 (double-size)	.35	1.05	2.10
101-109		.55	1.10
■ **RED SONJA**			
5-11		.50	1.00
■ **ROM**			
62-73		.40	.80
ANNUAL 4		.60	1.20
■ **SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN**			
107-118	.50	1.50	3.00
■ **THE THING**			
19-30		.50	1.00
■ **THOR**			
351-362		.50	1.00
ANNUAL 13	.35	1.00	2.00



Send your letters to: MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE, c/o Marvel Comics Group, 387 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016.

Attention correspondents: All letters to be considered for publication must include your complete name and address, though we will gladly withhold that info by request!

To tell you the truth, we don't know what this month's letter column title means either, but it's sure got a nice rhythm to it, doesn't it? We bet Tom Woods of Denison, TX understands it, though, because he's the guy who sent it in. Thanks a lot, Tom! A little confusion now and then does a body good.

So listen: If any of the rest of you out there have an innovative way to confuse us, or simply an idea about a nifty new title for this column, well, pass it along, kemosabe! If we use your idea, we'll even say "thanks" by printing your name right here in this space.

What, you thought we'd print your name in BARBIE FASHION?

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,

If you can, write me back and tell me if the Green Goblin is a mutant, or the Black Panther, Moon Knight, Hobgoblin, Nightmare, the Silver Surfer, Thanos, Kraven, the Kingpin, Elektra, or the High Evolutionary.

And if you could, tell me what Major Vance Astro or Marvel Boy looks like.

David Hedrington
110 E. 176 St.
Bronx, NY 10453

Tell you what they look like, David? Why don't we just *show* you? You can find pictures of the two of them in this very letter column. Of course, if you want to see more of them (in senses-shattering action, no less), you can find Marvel Boy in every issue of THE NEW WARRIORS while his older counterpart leads the pack in the pages of GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY.

As for your other question, we've actually been getting a bunch of letters recently that ask whether various Marvel characters are mutants, so we guess we should probably clarify just what a mutant is in the first place. Basically, a mutant is someone whose powers result from genetics; mutants are born with their powers, although those powers might not show up until they get older. For instance, Cyclops and the Beast are both mutants, even though Cyke's optic blasts didn't appear until he hit puberty (while the Beast has had oversized hands and feet since birth).

Given that definition, the folks on your list aren't mutants. Some of them — the Green Goblin, Moon Knight, the Kingpin, and Elektra — started out as normal people who either worked on developing their own physical abilities or (in the case of the Goblin) rely largely on a variety of scientific devices. The Black Panther and Kraven also put in a lot of hard work and training, but their jungle-honed senses and abilities were also enhanced by mystic herbs and potions. Thanos and the High Evolutionary put themselves through advanced scientific processes that transformed them into godlike beings (which is a pretty good trick to try at parties), while the Silver Surfer received his power from another godlike being, namely Galactus. And Nightmare is a magical entity who dwells in a mystic realm; heck, we're not even sure that Nightmare *has* genes!

So when you come down to it, since none of these folks received their powers or abilities through their genes, none of them are actually mutants. But when you consider the kinds of things they can do, we'd say they're a pretty impressive group nonetheless!

"Yellow, yellow everywhere and not a drop to drink."

Okay, so maybe that doesn't make a whole lot of sense, but hey, we're still working on "shinny shan tobby!" One thing's for sure, though — this snappy yellow background is here to

Introduce our LETTER OF THE MONTH! For the first time in, oh, thirty days or so, we've delved back into our voluminous sacks of mail and pulled out a single missive that we think will be of particular interest to the rampaging hordes of Marveldom. And just to make sure that it gets the notice it deserves, we've placed it in a daisy-hued place of honor.

This time around, our Letter of the Month raises a serious issue that we think will probably stir up just a wee bit of controversy. Honestly, we can't wait to see what the next couple of weeks' worth of mail looks like. . .

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,

I am a 21-year-old student who is hoping to be a psychologist (just to show you that not all your fans are pupils under fourteen). It has taken me about fifteen years of being a devoted Marvel fan to finally decide to write you a few lines.

In the past few years, most comics have become increasingly sincere and realistic. Formerly white teams like the X-Men suddenly showcased members of every ethnic group. Iron Fist and Misty Knight were an item long before *Jungle Fever*. We saw teenage suicide in THE NEW MUTANTS. We wept as we saw Captain Marvel die of cancer — that actually was the first comic book to make me cry, and I am not a sentimental kind of guy. Prostitution, alcoholism, and drug abuse were repeatedly used as subjects for great stories.

Still, there is one fact of everyday life that has been shunned by your writers so far: homosexuality. I'm talking about gay men and lesbian women. I'm talking about approximately five to fifteen percent of the population.

The only characters who were ever hinted at as being homosexuals were villains. Arcade jumps to mind, or more recently, Desmond Marrs. I know the topic is not easy to handle. DC introduced a gay hero in the New Guardians and it was most embarassing. But still I think that comics are a great way to fight for more tolerance and understanding. I always wished for a New Mutant to discover that he (or she) was gay because it was a book about growing up and teenage problems. I do not think X-FORCE can fill that gap, and I miss Mirage, Magik, Wolfsbane, Warlock, and Cypher. I know you got severely criticized a few years back for portraying gay rapists in THE HULK Magazine #23. Maybe the time has come to make up for this.

As life for gay people is not easy, I would ask you not to print my name and address.

(Name and address withheld by request)

You're right, friend, when you say that it's important for comics and other media to show the world as it is, and that includes portrayals of all sorts of minorities. What you don't seem to be aware of, though, is that, while we don't make a big deal out of it, Marvel already has a number of characters who are gay.

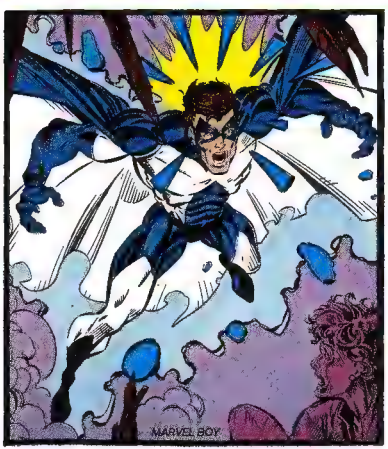
Perhaps the most prominent example is Alpha Flight's Northstar. It's been pretty clear for some time that he's gay, although he hasn't said so in public. In fact, Northstar's about to go through some significant changes in his life as a direct result of being gay, so you may want to keep an eye out for the next few issues of ALPHA FLIGHT to see how it goes.

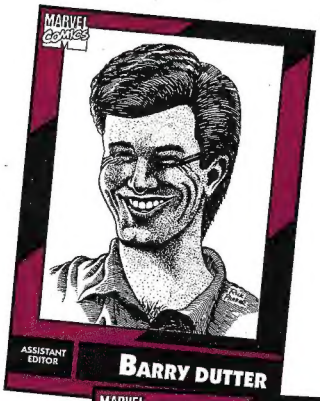
Another (non-super) gay Marvel character who springs to mind is Captain America's friend Arnie Roth. Arnie's known Cap since they were kids, and he spent many happy years living with a male friend named Michael, even though his homosexuality (and friendship with Cap) also made him a target for the Red Skull in a now-classic storyline that reached its climax in CAPTAIN AMERICA #300.

None of this is to say that Marvel is the only comics company to show gay characters. As you've pointed out, DC had a gay hero in one of their titles, and Superman's supporting cast has included a lesbian policewoman. Also, not too long ago, Eclipse Comics published a sensitive story about the kind of teenage dilemma you describe in ZOT! #33. Finally, something else you might want to check out is one of the pioneering portrayals of gays in comics: the stories that writer-artist Howard Cruse did in the '70s and '80s for underground and independent comic book companies such as Kitchen Sink Press (particularly those stories that feature a character named Wendell). The owner of your local comics specialty shop should be able to help you track down some of Howard's work. It's worth the trip.

See? And here you thought it was all done by elves.

Hmm. . .Speaking of elves, it looks like it's about time to click our heels three times, say the magic words "Shinny shan tobby," and transport ourselves back to our happy home in Never Nerverland for yet another month. But before we go, let's all take a tip from country music superstar Minnie Pearl and say, "So long, yawl, 'til next month!"





ASSISTANT EDITOR CARDS — Batch The First!

It all started out simply enough, as these things always do. MARVEL AGE was contacted by our lovely people in our Promotions Dept. about running the new Marvel Editor's trading cards, being made available free to lucky Marveloids across the country at the greater comic book conventions. We ran the piece, and figured that was that.

Suddenly we were flooded with letters, postcards and telephone calls from readers everywhere who'd been unable to collect a complete set of the cards, and were begging us to run them in MARVEL AGE. So we did, and figured that was that.

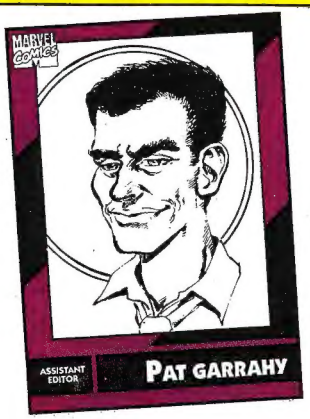
Wrong again. Now, it's the Assistant Editors and Bullpenners gang who want their moment in the sun, demanding that we herald their unsung contributions to the exciting world of comics.

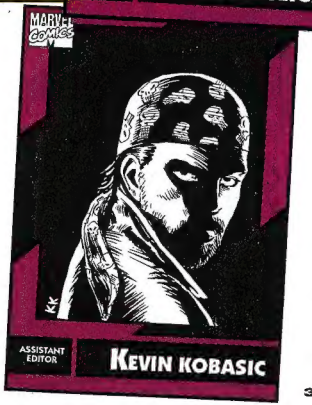
So here they are, exclusively printed in this magazine — *and not available at any store or convention anywhere!* There will be more next issue, too.

Speaking of next issue, we'll be featuring a look at the CAGE series, with a 5-page preview of the new Luke! We'll also have coverage on the new wrestling comic book — yes, *wrestling comic book* — WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING, featuring the stars of the WCW.

Miss next issue at your own risk, people. See you in 30 days.

—Mike Lackey





THE MARVEL® CHECKLIST

Yes, friends, it's once again time for a complete encapsulation of available Marvel Comics for January, 1992. It's going to be a big month, so pay attention, there may be a quiz.

TITLES SHIPPING JANUARY 7

- ☐ CAPTAIN AMERICA #398 $1.25
  Gruenwald, Levins, Bulandi
  Part 1 of Galactic Storm!
- ☐ AVENGERS WEST COAST #80 $1.25
  Thomas/Ross/Dzon
  Part 2 of Galactic Storm!
- ☐ DAREDEVIL #302 $1.25
  Chichester, Weeks, Williamson
- ☐ DARKHAWK #13 $1.25
  Fingeroth, Manley, Villagran
- ☐ NAMOR #24 $1.25
  Byrne, Wiacek
  Featuring Wolverine!
- ☐ NFL SUPERPRO #6 $1.25
  Dixon, Delbo, DeCarlo
- ☐ PIRATES OF DARK WATER #5 $1.25
  Zimmerman, Zick, Akin
- ☐ UNCANNY X-MEN #286 $1.25
  Byrne, Lee, Portacio, Thibert
- ☐ WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #86 $1.25
  Mackie, Saviuk, DeLaRosa
- ☐ SHE-HULK #37 $1.75
  Byrne, Williams
  The Living Eraser Swipes!
- ☐ MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS #97 $1.50
  Various

TITLES SHIPPING JANUARY 14

- ☐ HOOK #4 $1.00
  Vess, Lago, Rodier
- ☐ AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #360 $1.25
  Michelinie, Marrinnan, Williams
- ☐ BARBIE #15 $1.25
  Trusiani, Brock, Lucas
  Barbie's in Egypt!
- ☐ BILL & TED'S EXCELLENT COMIC BOOK #4 $1.25
  Dorkin, DeStefano
- ☐ QUASAR #32 $1.25
  Gruenwald, Capullo, Candelario
  Part 3 of Galactic Storm!
- ☐ SLEEPWALKER #10 $1.25
  Budiansky, Blevins, Manley
  Introducing Dream Team!
- ☐ WONDER MAN #7 $1.25
  Jones, Johnson ,Harps
  Part 4 of Galactic Storm!
- ☐ ALPHA FLIGHT #106 $1.75
  Lobdell, Pacella, Panosian
- ☐ GHOST RIDER #23 $1.75
  Mackie, Tex
  Has nothing to do with Galactic Storm!
- ☐ PUNISHER WAR ZONE #1 $2.25
  Dixon, Romita Jr., Janson
  Boom!
- ☐ WOLVERINE #52 $1.75
  Hama, Silvestri, Green
- ☐ THE DESTROYER #4 $1.95
  Murray, Cockrum, Fredericks
- ☐ SAVAGE SWORD #195 $2.25
  Thomas, Buscema, Chan
  Cover by Ovi!
- ☐ MARVEL AGE #110 $1.00
  Coverage on the new Luke Cage!
  Still holds out at a buck!
- ☐ AVENGERS #345 $1.25
  Harras, Epting, Palmer
  Part 5 of Galactic Storm!
- ☐ CONAN #254 $1.25
  Thomas, Docherty, Chan
- ☐ G.I. JOE #122 $1.25
  Hama, Wildman, Emberlin
- ☐ GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY #22 $1.25
  Valentino, Montano

TITLES SHIPPING JANUARY 21

- ☐ INCREDIBLE HULK #391 $1.25
  David, Keown, Farmer
  Guest-starring X-Factor!
- ☐ MARVEL TALES #259 $1.25
  Stern, Romita Jr., Janson
  The Hobgoblin!
- ☐ PUNISHER #61 $1.25
  Baron, Mayerik
- ☐ WHAT IF? #35 $1.25
  Thomas, Lofficier
- ☐ X-FACTOR #76 $1.25
  David, Stroman, Milgrom
  No Galactic Storm, here!
- ☐ X-MEN #6 $1.25
  Lee, Byrne, Williams
- ☐ MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS #98 $1.50
  Various
- ☐ DEATH'S HEAD 2 #1 $1.75
  Abnett, Sharp, Lanning
- ☐ EXCALIBUR #48 $1.75
  Davis, Farmer
  The Anti-Pheonix?
- ☐ SHIELD #33 $1.75
  Lobdell, Stiner, Hudson
- ☐ SPIDER-MAN #20 $1.75
  Larsen
  The Sinister Six!
- ☐ WARLOCK AND THE INFINITY WATCH #2 $1.75
  Starlin, Medina, Austin
  Isn't Gamora a flying turtle?
- ☐ AMAZING FANTASY #15 REPRINT $2.95
  Lee, Ditko
  Another Marvel Milestone!
- ☐ DOCTOR WHO #182 $4.50

TITLES SHIPPING JANUARY 28

- ☐ BARBIE FASHION #15 $1.25
  Trusiani & Slate
- ☐ CAPTAIN PLANET #6 $1.25
  Dutter, Delbo, Baskerville
- ☐ DEFENDERS OF DYNATRON CITY #2 $1.25
  Purcell, Cirocco
- ☐ FANTASTIC FOUR #362
  DeFalco, Ryan, Bulandi
  Guest-starring Spider-Man!
- ☐ IRON MAN #278 $1.25
  Kaminski, Ryan, Wiacek
  Part 6 of Galactic Storm!
- ☐ JAMES BOND JR. #3 $1.25
  Jr. — James Bond Jr.!
- ☐ KID 'N PLAY #2 $1.25
  Coye, Frazier, Boyd
  Which one's Kid and which one's Play?
- ☐ NEW WARRIORS #21 $1.25
  Nicieiza, Bagley, Mahlstedt
- ☐ SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #186 $1.25
  DeMatteis, Buscema
  Will the Vulture finally croak?
- ☐ THOR #445 $1.25
  DeFalco, Frenz, Milgrom
  Part 7 of Galactic Storm!
- ☐ WHAT THE?! #17 $1.25
  More Marvel Merriment!
- ☐ X-FORCE #8 $1.25
  Liefeld, Nicieiza
- ☐ X-MEN CLASSIC #69 $1.25
  Claremont & Mignola
- ☐ DEATHLOK #9 $1.75
  Wright, Cowan, Manley
- ☐ DR. STRANGE #39 $1.75
  Thomas, Isherwood
- ☐ MOON KNIGHT #38 $1.75
  Kavanagh, Garney, Palmer
- ☐ THE NAM #66 $1.75
  Dixon, Heath
- ☐ PUNISHER WAR JOURNAL #40 $1.75
  Dixon, Wagner
  Painted Mike Golden cover!
- ☐ CONAN SAGA #60 $2.25
  Thomas, Buscema, Nebres
  See Sal Buscema do Conan!

NEXT ISSUE:

ANSWERS TO MARVEL® TRIVIA QUIZ

1. B	5. C	9. B
2. A	6. A	10. A
3. B	7. C	11. C
4. C	8. C	12. B

THE 1992 MARVEL AGE® CALENDAR

JANUARY

BY MIKE LACKEY AND DARREN AUCK

SO THIS IS WHAT IT'S LIKE TO DEAD, HUH? IF I HAD SOME CANDY IT'D BE AN AFTER-LIFE MINT! HEY-- I JUS
D BOY ARE
I'VE OVE
THAT ELV
HERE, IS TH
UCKY? IT'S
RE DEAD AROUND HERE! HA HA! I KILL ME!
LADY DEATH-- PLEASE SHUT HIM UP!

AY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY

UCK.

HI, MOM!

IF YOU MISSED LAST ISSUE--I'VE GOT GOOD NEWS!

MARVEL AGE

RICK JONES IS DEAD!

FORBIE! WHAT'LL WE DO?

7

Q: WHAT DO YOU GET WHEN YOU CROSS RICK JONES AND AN APE?

8

A: A DEAD APE!

9

IT'S DENTAL HYGIENE DAY!

POP

10

BRUSH UP, AMERICA!

11

THAT'S THE ONLY GREEN TOOTH I'LL EVER HAVE!

12

VE AN FTER-

14

RICK-- DEAD? GIVE ME TIME TO MOURN HIS PASSING...

15

O.K. THAT'S ENOUGH OF THAT.

16

GEE, THANKS.

17

18

GEE, EVEN MEPHISTO DON'T WANT ME!

22

MAYBE I SHOULD NOT HAVE BEEN SUCH A JERK.

23

MAYBE I SHOULD HAVE BEEN NICER TO MY FRIENDS.

24

I'M ALL DRESSED UP WITH NO PLACE TO GHOST!

25

! IT'S E IN!

GO BACK RICK... YOU AREN'T READY...

29

HE--HE'S ALIVE!

WOW!

I'VE LEARNED MY LESSON--I'LL BE GOOD FROM NOW ON, BUT--I HAVE A QUESTION--

--WHILE I WAS GONE WERE YOU JONES-IN' FOR ME?